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Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu gestures during his speech to a joint session of Congress yesterday, as Vice President Al Gore (left) and House Speaker Newt Gingrich look on. (Ya'acov Sa'ar/GPO)

Netanyahu: I will wean Israel from US economic aid

PRIME Minister Binyamin Netanyahu told Congress yesterday that he would begin weaning Israel from the \$1.2 billion economic assistance package it receives from the US. The announcement was enthusiastically received by a Republican-controlled Congress whose priority for the past two years has been to reduce the federal budget, and which has slashed foreign assistance by about a third. Israel and Egypt, which together receive \$5.1 billion annually in economic and military aid, have been among the few recipients whose aid has not been reduced.

HILLEL KUTTLER
WASHINGTON
say that Israel has reached childhood's end and that it has matured enough to begin approaching a state of self-reliance," Netanyahu said. After stating that he is "committed to turning Israel's economy into a free market of goods and ideas, the only way to bring ourselves to true independence," a roar came from the Republican side of the House chamber. It increased in volume as Netanyahu continued: "This means free enterprise, privatization, open capital markets, an end to cartels, lower taxes, deregulation, and reducing the size of government."

Egypt sent its second-ranking diplomat. Netanyahu's assertion near the end of his address that Israel "shall insist on the right of Jews to live anywhere in the land" was greeted with applause, although Secretary of State Warren Christopher was seen shifting in his seat at those words. He hit on the familiar themes of the two countries' holding democracy and freedom sacred, and said he was speaking for Israelis and Jews everywhere by bringing a "Thank you, people of America." Netanyahu also pledged to begin negotiations with the PA on a final-status agreement, if the Palestinians abided by those pacts already signed, and said Israel is ready to engage Syria and Lebanon in "meaningful negotiations" and broaden the circle of peace throughout the region. But he also repeated remarks made during Monday's press conference with Clinton that reciprocity dictates that terrorism must cease for negotiations to succeed. He drew cheers of "Hear! Hear!" when he declared that Jerusalem will never be divided. Netanyahu hammered away at the need for the PA to curb terrorism but also demanded that Syria curb Hizbullah attacks on northern Israel. "This means that the fight against terror cannot be episodic. It cannot be conditional. It cannot be whimsical. It cannot be optional. It must become the mainstay of a relationship of trust between Israel and its Arab interlocutors," he said. Netanyahu also quoted Psalms 29:11, "God will give strength to His people; God will bless His people with peace," calling the verse the "original source" for the concept of "peace through strength."

Coalition MKs threaten to vote against proposed budget cuts

MKS from Likud, Gesher, and Tsomet were almost unanimous in attacking the composition of the government's planned budget cuts yesterday, with a few of them threatening to vote against the budget. "With the plan as it is, I will recommend that the Gesher faction vote against it," said Maxim Levy. "I don't know of any government that takes only a week to prepare a plan," he charged. "It's inconceivable that ministers who have never before occupied any public post, and do not yet know their ministries, could deal with this plan seriously. You're letting the [Treasury] clerks run the country!" "We all have the feeling that this plan hits too much at the weaker segments of society," said Ze'ev Boim (Likud). Faction chairman Michael Eitan unsuccessfully attempted to persuade his MKs to stop acting like the opposition, at one point completely losing his temper. "We aren't taking anything from families earning NIS 2,500," he shouted, after Haim Dayan (Tsomet) began protesting that such families could not afford cuts in their benefits. "This program does not include any injury to families earning NIS 2,500. Why do we need to spread this slander about ourselves?" Instead of attacking this government, he said, the faction should be attacking the previous government, whose policies made the cuts necessary. "Where are the Likud MKs saying we've gotten to this situation because of the previous government?" he demanded. "Where are the Likud MKs saying that the number of families under the poverty line hit a record under the previous government?" "The point is what the people are expecting of us, not what we say about the previous government," retorted social caucus chairman Shaul Amor (Likud). "The previous government increased the societal gap, and we have to reduce it. But this program will increase the gap even further, in violation of our promises." Eliezer Zandberg (Tsomet) added that the government has done a poor job of explaining the program. No one, including Likud MKs, appears to know what the plan really contains, he said. Only a few MKs, such as Eitan, Silvan Shalom (Likud), and Moshe Peled (Tsomet), expressed any support for the government. Peled was one of the strongest. "I want to offer my support to Finance Minister [Dan Meridor] for this bold step of budget-cutting," he said. "We must not be swept away by the populists. They are trying to incite against the government. These are necessary measures, and I call on all my colleagues to support the government."

EVELYN GORDON
At the end of the meeting, Meridor tried to defend the program to the faction, but many of the MKs did not wait to hear him. "No MK has an obligation to say amen to every government proposal," Meridor said. "Not all wisdom lies in the government... But we aren't the opposition - we're the coalition." "There's nothing easier for the opposition than to point to all these critical needs [defense, education, welfare, and health] and oppose cutting from any one of them. But we don't have enough money for all of these." The government's job, he added, is to make choices. At the end, Eitan tried to pass a summary statement - which he said most of the faction had signed - stating that the faction "will back the government's decisions in the Knesset, while holding discussions with the finance minister regarding the details of the plan and its implementation." "We all disagree with the plan, but we're going to back it?" Amor responded in disbelief. "We're the coalition, and the bottom line is that we back the government," Eitan answered. "I'm part of the coalition, and I support the government, but this [plan] I'm not backing - and I don't want to back it," retorted Levy.

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Four moshav and kibbutz residents held in torture of Palestinian youths

FOUR Tanachim-area kibbutz and moshav residents have been arrested for allegedly tying up and torturing two Palestinian youths they claim stole tomatoes from their fields, police said yesterday. The suspects in the incident, which took place Monday, are a 22-year-old resident of Kibbutz Givat Oz, and a man, 40, and two 17-year-olds from Moshav Mei-Ami. They allegedly burned cigarettes on the youths, 10- and 13-year-old brothers from Zabuba village, north of Jenin. They then tore off their clothes with a knife, and sent them away naked from a storage hut in the fields of Moshav Mele'a, where they were held for about 90 minutes. "When I took the boy back to the storage hut where he said he had been beaten, we found blood stains on the ground, the wooden poles where he said they were tied, and the metal poles with which they were beaten," said Supt. Amal Khalil, initially in charge of the investigation. Khalil said it was the second time in recent months Jewish

BILL HUTMAN
residents in the area south of Afula had beaten Palestinians they said had entered their fields, or in revenge for thefts from their farms. The 13-year-old was reported to be in serious condition at a Jenin hospital, although police had yet to confirm this. The Israel Police asked the Palestinian Police to question the boy. The 10-year-old, who went with his father to the District Coordinating Office in Jenin to report the incident on Tuesday, had cigarette burn marks on his neck, and was unable to walk because of injuries to one of his legs, Khalil said. The DCO referred the father and son to the Dotan Police station, where Khalil is in charge of investigations. Khalil took the father and son back to the scene of the beating, where the first suspect, from Kibbutz Givat Oz, was spotted by the boy and arrested. Khalil said the kibbutznik admitted to beating the older boy, and identified several other persons involved. Later Tuesday, the three other suspects from Mei-Ami were arrested. All the suspects were

released after questioning. The spokeswoman for the Northern District, to which the case was transferred, said the decision to release them was made by the Afula police chief, and did not indicate that police did not take the allegations seriously. The 10-year-old said he and his brother were heading toward the moshav looking for work, when two teenagers - apparently the 17-year-olds detained - pulled up alongside them in a jeep, forced them into the vehicle, and handcuffed their arms behind their backs with plastic handcuffs. The child also said seven people were in the storage hut. Khalil said he believed that while only several of them were involved in the beating, others looked on and did nothing. The Northern District spokeswoman said no additional arrests were expected, however, and investigators from Afula determined that no one else was involved. The spokeswoman said the suspects admitted to beating the brothers, and they had done so when they caught the brothers trying to steal tomatoes. Two months ago, two moshav members were convicted of tying up and beating a Palestinian they alleged tried to steal from their fields, Khalil said.

A family outing

HILLEL KUTTLER
WASHINGTON
WHILE her husband was playing to the crowd here, Sara Netanyahu was playing at the zoo. On Tuesday, she and son Yair visited the National Zoo, home of the lone surviving panda given to Richard Nixon when he made his historic visit to China in 1972. They also took in a performance of the Disney musical *Beauty and the Beast* at the Kennedy Center. Last night, the family was scheduled to visit the National Air and Space Museum, and earlier in the day the adults spent an hour at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. At several of Binyamin Netanyahu's public events, including laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and at the graves of John and Robert Kennedy on Tuesday, and yesterday's appearance before the National Press Club, Sara also attended. She also indulged in some of her own career interests, discussing experimental education at a luncheon with Tipper Gore and childhood psychology with an aide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala. Aides to Netanyahu were decidedly uninterested in providing information on the family's doings, citing the "sacrifices" they make under the media spotlight while in Israel. Meanwhile, Netanyahu's daughter, Noa, returned to Israel from the US with her family yesterday. She will soon enter the IDF, but told reporters at Ben-Gurion Airport that she did not know what she wants to do in the army. Asked how she felt about her father's election, Noa said, "It was a pleasant surprise."

The new 'New Middle East'

ANALYSIS
DAVID MAKOVSKY/WASHINGTON
IF one were in an Arab capital watching Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's televised speech to Congress yesterday, a searing impression would be the legislators' standing ovation in response to his call never to redive Jerusalem. The image of the entire Congress standing and cheering as Netanyahu said the city would stay under Israeli sovereignty will probably be replayed on TV news shows in the Arab world. This will make it clear that isolating Israel on Jerusalem is not as simple as passing resolutions at an Arab summit. Another message Arab leaders may not like was Netanyahu's vision of a "New Middle East" which puts democracy, not economics, front and center in the peace process. It remains unclear whether this will guide Netanyahu in practice or was merely a rhetorical flourish that was meant to play well with his American audience. Indeed, part of Netanyahu's appeal to Congress was his ability to wrap his message in terms of

values held dear by Americans - self-reliance, freedom, justice, and human rights - and his claim that Israel is not against Islam. Netanyahu also touched another point sensitive to the Arabs. While he has hammered home his watchword of "reciprocity," making it palpably clear what he expects from the Arab side, he refused to say what Israel would give in return assuming his terms were met. He would only say that at that point, he would be willing to negotiate a final-status agreement, as mandated by the Oslo accords. Finally, while Netanyahu won warm applause for his important, albeit qualified promise to "begin the long-term process of gradually reducing" foreign aid, Egypt is likely to view the move as putting political pressure upon it. US assistance to Cairo only passes in Congress due to a linkage with Israel and the efforts of the pro-Israel community.

The idea of democratizing the Arab world, however, is bound to be the one point of Netanyahu's speech which will draw the most scrutiny in Arab capitals. It marked a major departure for Israeli leaders, even if its operational significance remains unclear. While its appeal may resonate in some key quarters of Arab public opinion - for example, among Palestinians who deeply want some check on Yasser Arafat's authority - it won't be applauded by the very leaders whose cooperation Israel needs for any future agreements. Calling democracy a pillar of Middle East peacemaking is something Yitzhak Rabin consistently opposed. Whenever Rabin was asked about the topic, he would flick his wrist and say: "I am not [Hanan] Ashrawi." He would then say that he did not care what Arafat did internally, as long as he curbed terrorism. Netanyahu expressed philosophical disagreement with this position when he said: "States (Continued on Page 2)

Mordechai calls on Syria to stop terror

LIAT COLLINS
DEFENSE Minister Yitzhak Mordechai yesterday called on Syria to stop supporting terror. Speaking in the Knesset plenum while answering a series of parliamentary questions and motions for the agenda, Mordechai said Syria cannot say it is interested in peace while continuing to activate terror cells in Lebanon and elsewhere. "We do want to speak and search for a way to true and stable peace. At the same time, we can't agree to a country or countries adopting the path of terror, sending or backing up terror cells, and encouraging or even indirectly activating terror cells against the State of Israel," Mordechai said. "I'm calling on the Syrian government; it can't decide it is strategically on the way to peace and operate terror cells in Lebanon and elsewhere." He said that were Syria to prevent Hizbullah activities, "it would definitely contribute a great deal to the peace process and certainly wouldn't hurt it." Mordechai said the IDF is

question of whether Hizbullah has Katyushas with a 40-km. range, which would allow them to reach the Haifa suburbs. On Tuesday, the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee heard that Hizbullah had received a shipment of Iranian-produced improved Katyushas. continuing to cope with an entire complexity of present and future threats. He also said the Defense Ministry intends to fix public shelters in the North in the coming year. He avoided giving a direct answer to the

question of whether Hizbullah has Katyushas with a 40-km. range, which would allow them to reach the Haifa suburbs. On Tuesday, the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee heard that Hizbullah had received a shipment of Iranian-produced improved Katyushas.



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Palestinians angry over Netanyahu's remarks in US

PALESTINIAN reaction to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's US visit has been overwhelmingly negative, primarily because of his failure to commit to redeploy the IDF in Hebron or follow the Oslo process.

"We were expecting Mr. Netanyahu would give a present to Mr. Clinton and declare he will redeploy in Hebron and go on with the peace process," Hebron Mayor Mustafa Natshe said yesterday. "The opposite occurred. We see it as a bad sign. This increases frustration among people in the city."

Yesterday morning, local youths threw a homemade pipebomb at soldiers guarding a checkpoint near the entrance to Hebron. The bomb did not explode. This was followed by

JON IMMANUEL

stone-throwing by other youths. Some saw this as a response to Netanyahu's White House press conference on Tuesday, which was also considered disappointing.

"I see Netanyahu's position as dangerous," Ahmed Qreia, Speaker of the Palestinian Council, said. "He is giving a new concept of peace, security for peace. But the concept of the current peace process is based on land for peace."

He also said that he thought the Americans "should have been more resolute about settlements." Israel Radio quoted Marwan Kanafani, a

spokesman for PA President Yasser Arafat, as saying that Netanyahu's comments on Jerusalem were "a lie," as the PA does not want to rededicate Jerusalem, but to establish two capitals in one united city.

Meanwhile, Abbas Zaki, the most popular Fatah activist in Hebron and a member of the Palestinian Council, was questioned by police about accusations he incited youths from near-by Samua to burn Israeli road-building equipment working on a bypass road three weeks ago. Samua spent two weeks under curfew.

In Gaza, Awad Silmi, a convicted Hamas gunman suspected of shooting dead Col. Meir Mintz in 1994, escaped from prison two days ago, Palestinian sources told Israel Radio.

Report: Turkey likely to keep defense ties with Israel

DOUGLAS DAVIS

LONDON

NECMETTIN Erbakan, the first Islamist prime minister of modern Turkey, is expected to reduce the visibility of Ankara's relationship with Israel, while keeping the military cooperation agreement intact, according to the chief columnist of the Islamist daily *Zaman*.

Interviewed by the London-based daily newsletter *Mideast Mirror*, Fehmi Koru said Erbakan's government might impose cosmetic changes to make Turkey's relations with Israel less transparent.

However, he is unlikely to threaten the military relationship, if only because former premier

Tansu Ciller made this, as well as adherence to other agreements, conditions of entering a coalition agreement with his Islamic Welfare Party.

At the same time, noted Koru, Erbakan is likely to disappoint the expectations of some of his neighbors, including Syrian President Hafez Assad, who sent him a warm cable congratulating him on coming to power and hoping for an improvement in relations.

Syrian-Turkish ties have been strained in recent months because

of a long-standing water dispute and because of Syrian support for the anti-Turkish PKK Kurdish movement, which is based in Damascus and trains under Syrian auspices in both Syria and the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley of east Lebanon.

According to Koru, the Erbakan's party does not think highly of the Syrian regime and will not jeopardize its credibility among its secular coalition partners by changing policy regarding Syria.

He predicted the party would maintain its "Islamic unity" rhetoric and might seek a measure of rapprochement with Iran.

Hizbullah blasts IDF, SLA outposts

HIZBULLAH gunmen shelled IDF and South Lebanese Army positions with mortars yesterday morning, as fighting continued in the security zone.

There were no casualties among the soldiers manning the posts in the Ali Tahr hill range in the eastern sector of the zone. IDF and SLA gunners returned fire. Hizbullah claimed responsibility for the attacks, in a statement issued in Beirut.

The shooting followed an incident Tuesday in which a teenage Lebanese girl was wounded by SLA shelling near Habboush village, north of the security zone.

Reports from Lebanon said she was with friends picking herbs in the area when shells fell nearby, wounding her in the legs.

The Voice of the South radio station, which broadcasts from the zone, said the shelling was in

DAVID RUDGE

reaction to suspicious movement in the area.

The area itself is not populated and is regularly used by Hizbullah for sending squads into the zone on bomb-planting and ambush missions, as well as for firing mortars at IDF and SLA strongholds.

Hizbullah, in its statement, described the shelling as a flagrant breach of the understandings reached after Operation Grapes of Wrath.

In the past, Hizbullah retaliated for civilian casualties, even if they were caused inadvertently, by firing Katyusha rockets at the Galilee.

Since Operation Grapes of Wrath, however, the organization has refrained from such action, although it has frequently

breached the understandings by operating in and from villages north of the zone.

Meanwhile, OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine presented certificates of merit on Tuesday night to two officers, for their performance during the incident a month ago in which five Nahal soldiers were killed and eight others wounded in a Hizbullah ambush in the zone.

The awards were presented to Lt. (res.) Ya'acov Cohen, a physician, for his treatment of the casualties in the field and the way he organized their evacuation, and to Lt. Eran Alon, deputy commander of the Nahal unit, for his leadership of the rescue squad sent to the scene.

Levine praised the two officers for their performance under very difficult conditions.



A member of the Jahalin Beduin tribe turns away from earth-moving equipment near his encampment outside Ma'aleh Adumim yesterday.

Jerusalem-area Beduin face eviction

JON IMMANUEL

A BEDUIN tribe on the outskirts of Jerusalem is caught between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

Earth movers this week began working three meters from one of six Jahalin Beduin encampments in the path of Ma'aleh Adumim. The High Court imposed an August 28 deadline on the tribe to move to another site allocated to it, but members of the tribe say they are torn between the Israeli order and PA orders to stay put.

The new site is closer to Abu Dis and the PA says the land to which the tribe is being relocated is private land belonging to residents of the town.

Although some 100 Jahalin families already live there, they

have no permanent right of residence. The 49 others (about 400 people) ordered to move say they fear they will be victimized by the PA as collaborators if they move with an Israeli assurance that their relocation is permanent. They refuse to move if it only means they can be shifted again.

The Jahalin fled the Negev in 1950 and settled in the Judean desert under Jordanian rule, on the road to Jericho, safe from the encroachment of Israel's developing society on Negev Beduin.

In 1967, they found themselves under Israeli rule again - and in the most rapidly developing settlement area of all. In 1981, the

land where they live was declared state land. In 1989, the civil administration began talking to them and in 1993, the year of the Oslo accords, they were offered alternatives sites.

They chose Abu Dis-Kedar. Water and power lines as well as a road were extended to the area.

However, now the Jahalin also have to contend with the PA. Palestine Radio reported Saturday, after a meeting between Jahalin representatives and PA President Yasser Arafat, that Arafat rejected "attempts at occupation" by the Israeli authorities.

Abu Dis is also the home of Palestinian Council chairman

Ahmed Qreia, apparently one of those with land claims in the area.

The council appointed a seven-member committee to help the Jahalin stand fast against settlement expansion, arguing it is their land, they are Palestinians, and they may not be forcibly moved under international law.

While 45 years of relative quiet came to an end this week with bulldozers, trucks, and earth movers encircling camps, sheep pens, and even individual tents and huts, the Jahalin said they are not nomads. Israel is offering them the right to build homes in the new site (if they can find the money), but the PA won't tolerate that if it won't tolerate them living there in tents.

בן דין ומאמץ
With great sorrow we announce the passing of our revered mother and grandmother
SARAH RUBINOFF ע"ה
widow of Reb Binyamin ז"ל
Jerusalem - Toronto
The funeral took place on Tuesday evening, July 9, 1996
Shiva at 9 Rehov Mishkelov, Apt. 8, Har Nof, Jerusalem
Mourning in Israel by:
Rabbi Sholom and Bayla Gold and family
Michael Rubinfeld and family
Mendel and Judy Rubinfeld and family

The Jerusalem Music Center,
together with the other beneficiaries of Yad Hanadiv, Israel,
mourns the passing of
AMSCHEL ROTHSCHILD
and extends its warmest sympathies to
Lord Jacob Rothschild
Isaac Stern, Chairman

CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY
expresses its deepest sorrow to the bereaved family and to Yad Hanadiv on the passing of
AMSCHEL M.J. ROTHSCHILD ז"ל

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
The Institute for Advanced Studies
mourns the untimely passing of
AMSCHEL M. J. ROTHSCHILD
and offers its heartfelt condolences to the Rothschild family

We mourn the tragic and untimely passing of
The Hon. AMSCHEL ROTHSCHILD ז"ל
A member of the Yad Hanadiv Council
and express our heartfelt condolences to his wife Anita, their children and families.
Yad Hanadiv Yad Avi Ha-Yishuv

Hizbullah renews offer of prisoner, body swap

BEIRUT (AP) - Hizbullah yesterday renewed an offer to repatriate the bodies of two IDF soldiers and release 17 South Lebanese Army soldiers in exchange for about 200 Lebanese prisoners.

The offer was made by the group's deputy leader, Sheik Naim Qassem, at a news conference in Beirut's southern suburbs. Qassem announced the release of two SLA men as "a humanitarian gesture."

The men, who had been held by Hizbullah for two years, presented themselves to journalists as Khalil Ali Hassan, a Shi'ite, and Francois Aoun, a Christian.

In recent years, there have been a number of releases by both sides. But Israel has yet to accept Hizbullah's offer to swap the bodies of the missing Israelis and the remaining 17 SLA militia detainees for all Lebanese prisoners, who include two Shi'ite leaders kidnapped in Israeli commando raids.

The bodies held by Hizbullah are believed to be those of Yosef Fink and Rahamim Alsheikh who were captured in an ambush in south Lebanon in February 1986.

Israeli officials say Ron Arad, a navigator whose plane was shot down over Lebanon in October 1986, is still alive. They say he has been taken to Iran after his initial capture in Lebanon by pro-Iranian militants.

"We have the bodies of two Israelis. We know nothing about the names or number of other [Israelis]. As to the SLA prisoners, they will remain with us until a prisoner exchange occurs," Qassem said.

Israeli commandos kidnapped Shi'ite leader Mustafa Dirani in May 1994 to interrogate him about Arad. He remains in an Israeli jail.

Hussein blames Syria for assassination attempts

DAVID MAKOVSKY

WASHINGTON

DURING the recent Arab summit in Cairo, Jordan's King Hussein complained to Syrian President Hafez Assad about two attempted assassinations which were thwarted. One was apparently directed against him, and the other against his brother, Crown Prince Hassan.

While no details on these attempts or their perpetrators are known, it seems Hussein has blamed the Syrians, because the perpetrators infiltrated across the Syrian border.

The assassination attempts were among several dozen infiltration efforts put by Hussein in a black-bound folder, including photographs. One such effort was aimed at Israeli tourists to Petra. These attempts occurred during the past several months.

Private guards replacing soldiers at Gaza border crossings

JON IMMANUEL

TO beef up security at Gaza border crossings, the IDF is considering the permanent replacement of many soldiers with civilian security companies more expert at the job, security sources said yesterday.

The experiment began at the Karni truck-crossing point two months ago, after soldiers failed to detect the terrorist who transferred from a Gaza truck to an Israeli truck on March 4, and then exploded himself in Tel Aviv, killing 13 others.

So far, the experiment, involving some 60 civilian security personnel, is considered a success. An important spinoff is that it takes the burden of security off reserve soldiers, and decreases friction with Palestinians "who prefer dealing with civilians," said Government Coordinator's Office spokesman Shlomo Dror.

The experiment could also be extended to Erez and to West Bank checkpoints, he said.

Dror denied radio reports of a conflict with Southern Command over the issue of manning the checkpoints.

Other security improvements will include magnetic cards issued to West Bank and Gaza Palestinians, including journalists, thus lessening the chance of crossing the Green Line with a forged document.

Police this week uncovered a factory in Dura, near Hebron, manufacturing fake Israeli ID cards.

NEWS IN BRIEF
10 Injured from chlorine inhalation
Ten people were slightly to moderately injured from chlorine inhalation at the Laroume Hotel swimming pool in Jerusalem, when the gas leaked from a truck that came to fill up the pool's chlorine tanks, a police spokesman said.
Firefighters and Environment Ministry workers called to the scene stopped the leak. The pool was ordered closed until at least this morning, the spokesman said. Three Magen David Adom ambulances took the injured, including the truck driver and pool visitors, to Hadassah-University Hospital at Ein Kerem and Shaare Zedek Hospital. *Bill Humam*

NEW
(Continued from Page 1)
regimes. I believe we can. It's a fact that we've had such peace agreements."
He seemed to suggest that Israel will have to insist on tough terms for peace, since it is predicated upon the prospect that peace with a non-democratic regime is reversible.
The Labor government believed that the best hope for political moderation rested with economic progress. Netanyahu, however, made no mention of economics as a key to peace.

COVENANT OVER MIDDLE EASTERN WATERS
The very waters of life, according to the Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions, are said to flow from the Holy Land of the Middle East region. Yet today's politicians are charging a perilous course: their policies could bury the area under desert sand and concrete, shatter hopes for lasting peace, and pose a threat far beyond the immediate reality.
Joyce Shira Starr, Ph.D., is a recognized authority on water policy and an expert on the Middle East. Bringing a unique perspective to this topic, she makes it dramatically clear that mankind's water and environment cannot be left to the secret domain of the powerful.

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Israel Police
National Headquarters
Investigations Branch
Missing Persons Bureau
- Unknown Woman -
The Israel Police requests the help of the public in its efforts to identify the body of a woman found on the Alon Road near Michmas in the Ramallah area on June 25, 1996.
Description:
Age: about 30-40.
Height: 150 cm.
Hair: long, brown.
Teeth: tooth missing in the lower jaw. Was wearing a silver locket in the form of a mask.
Clothes: White blouse, jeans, black high heeled shoes.
Anyone with information that may help in identifying this woman is asked to call 02-9774888, 02-308344, or any police station.

Handwritten note: אהבה ושלום

Russia restarts Chechnya war machine

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian guns and warplanes shelled a southern Chechen village yesterday, stepping up a military onslaught on separatist rebels after a reluctant six-week lull.

Inter-Tass news agency quoted local officials as saying that at least 20 civilians had been killed and many others wounded when Russian forces shelled and bombed Mahkety, 35 km south of the regional capital Grozny.

Russia's top military commander in Chechnya yesterday ordered the arrest of separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev. Interfax news agency quoted the Russian military press centre in the rebel region as saying.

Interfax said Yandarbiyev's mobile headquarters were believed to have been seated off in the southern village of Mehkety during an assault by Russian troops.

"Planes and artillery of the federal troops are making pinpoint strikes on Yandarbiyev's headquarters," Major Igor Melnikov, chief military spokesman in Chechnya, told Interfax.

"Measures are being taken to find and arrest Z. Yandarbiyev on orders from commander Vyacheslav Tikhomirov," Yandarbiyev took over sepa-

ratist forces last April after his predecessor, Dzhokhar Dudayev, died in a Russian rocket attack.

Tass later quoted a senior official of pro-Russian Chechnya authority as saying that three deaths could be confirmed so far. But the official made clear the number of casualties was high.

Russian Tsokayev told Tass that truckfuls of medical goods had been sent to the town of Shali where the injured residents of Mahkety were being treated. He said helicopters could be used to transport the injured to Shali.

Interfax news agency quoted the military spokesman as denying that any civilian targets had been attacked in the area. Melnikov said Russian helicopters had been attacked by rebels and launched a "pinpoint" retaliatory strike.

In a separate report Interfax quoted the Russian military as saying at least eight soldiers had been killed and 20 others injured in Gekhi, where Russians used aviation and artillery for the first time since the two sides agreed a truce on June 1.

Interfax said the shelling of Gekhi continued after women and children were allowed to leave the village.

But the agency later quoted a Russian commander as saying

troops were withdrawn from Gekhi yesterday after the local administration assured the military that rebels had left the settlement, 30 km southwest of Grozny.

The rebels said Russian troops had been driven from the village. They said at least 20 residents had been killed and many more injured.

The Russian war machine in Chechnya has been "fairly idle since President Boris Yeltsin agreed a truce and an exchange of prisoners at talks in the Kremlin with Yandarbiyev at the end of May.

Later talks, marred by mutual recriminations, brought little progress in ending a 19-month war which has already killed more than 30,000 people, most of them civilians.

The rebels want independence for the Caucasus region. Moscow says Chechnya is an integral part of the Russian Federation.

Moscow has accused the rebels of failing to disarm and free Russian prisoners, while the rebels have blamed Moscow for renegeing on deals to pull troops out and close checkpoints.

The Russian military has complained that the truce only allowed the rebels to rearm and rebuild communications lines.



A small group of Orange marchers gathers to watch and hurl abuse at British soldiers as they reinforce the barbed wire barricade at Drumcree near Portadown yesterday. During the previous night's rioting some 4,000 Orange men tried to break through the barrier before being repelled by security forces.

Hurricane Big Bertha churns nearer US shore

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) - Bending trees to the ground and knocking out electricity, Hurricane Bertha bashed the Bahamas with high winds and heavy rain yesterday as it churned toward the US coastline.

North Carolina officials urged some 50,000 residents and summer visitors on Hatteras and Ocracoke islands - popular tourist destinations on the Outer Banks, a chain of sandy islands just off the coast - to evacuate yesterday morning.

Bertha left four dead in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands before moving out of the Caribbean. It brushed past the Turks and Caicos Islands and veered northwest through the Bahamas with winds yesterday of 170 kph.

Forecasters expect Bertha to skirt the East Coast anywhere from northern Florida to Delaware, possibly hitting land later this week. The National Weather Service warned of heavy surf for the southeast US coast over the next day or two as the storm spun near-er to the Florida shore.

Hurricane warnings were in effect early yesterday for the central Bahamas, which are 95-400 km east of south Florida.

The National Weather Service issued hurricane watches for Brunswick, Georgia, and South and North Carolina to the Virginia state line and a tropical storm warning from Deerfield Beach, Florida, to Brunswick, Georgia.

"The storm is going to be paralleling part of the southeast coast," said Chris Landsea, meteorologist

with the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

"Through 24 hours it looks pretty clear. After that we think it will go more due north and then toward the north-northeast."

Bertha began spinning winds up to 185 kph early Tuesday, which upgraded it to a Category 3 storm capable of extensive damage. Its size alone - 740 km across - makes it formidable, said Jerry Jarrell, deputy director of the Hurricane Center in Miami.

Forecasters earlier thought Bertha would stay clear of the United States but that changed Tuesday. At noon yesterday, Bertha was about 90 km east of Eleuthera Island in the middle of the 700-island Bahamas archipelago, whipping the area with 169 kph winds.

Power and telephone lines on northern Eleuthera apparently were knocked out yesterday. On neighboring Abaco, boaters headed for shelters when forecasters warned Bertha was expected to make a near-hit on Cooper's Town.

The National Weather Service said Bertha was moving northwest at 30 kph. A gradual northward turn was expected. Until it turns, Bertha would move closer to Florida, the Weather Service said, explaining the tropical storm warnings along portions of the Florida east coast.

In south Florida, residents victimized by Hurricane Andrew four years ago stocked up at building supply stores and supermarkets even though forecasters said the state would escape the brunt of Bertha. "I don't trust that," said one shopper.

London sends in more troops as Ulster troubles flare again

BELFAST (AP) - Britain is sending a thousand more troops to Northern Ireland following three days of Protestant violence over a thwarted march through a Catholic enclave.

Angered by police resolve to prevent the march, which Protestant hard-liners claim as their historic right, gangs of youths attacked officers with gasoline bombs and rocks, hijacked and set fire to vehicles and blocked streets with burning barricades.

Firemen said they answered more than 180 calls overnight, the most ever.

Violence began Sunday after police stopped the Orange Order, the province's dominant Protestant fraternal group, from routing an annual march as usual through the main Catholic district in Portadown 25 miles (40 kms) southwest of Belfast.

Incidents escalated overnight across much of the province. Police reported that 49 officers and 37 civilians had been wounded since Sunday, while another 87 were arrested for participating in the riots throughout Northern Ireland.

Police said they fired about 350 plastic bullets to fend off mobs and are increasingly reliant on heavier armed and armored British soldiers in many areas.

The British army said it was sending two

more battalions, about 1,000 soldiers, raising troop levels in the British-ruled province to 18,500, the highest since 1982.

Protestant hard-liners have threatened to bring Northern Ireland to a standstill if police don't let them march down Garvaghy Road, Portadown's main Catholic enclave.

Police on Saturday ordered the parade to be rerouted, fearing Catholic riots if they didn't. Protestants have held their ground since Sunday at the Drumcree Anglican church north of the town, pitching tents in the graveyard.

Many on both sides expect worse confrontations in the runup to the weekend, when Protestants traditionally gather round bonfires and drink late into the night. On Friday more than 80,000 Orange marchers stage mass commemorations of their side's victories in 17th-century battles.

"Right or wrong, the people's view is: We've had enough," said the Rev. Eric Smyth, a former mayor of Belfast and member of Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party. "Protestant people on the ground are showing the government that if they won't let us live the way we want in our country, then no one will."

Gasoline bombs thrown by Protestants

ruined a stretch of shops in predominantly Protestant east Belfast, a Catholic school in north Belfast and a Catholic church in the affluent Protestant town of Donaghadee east of Belfast. The Catholic curate there was hospitalized after being overcome by smoke.

Thirty-two families, mostly Catholics from north Belfast, have appealed to be rehoused following intimidation and attacks on their state-provided homes, the government's Housing Executive said. Some homes hurriedly abandoned have been torched by Protestant mobs.

At least six firefighters were wounded by Protestants throwing bricks and bottles.

Ken McClune, spokesman for the Northern Ireland Fire Brigade, said it answered more than 180 calls in Belfast overnight - a record, he said, since Northern Ireland's "troubles" ignited in 1969.

Prime Minister John Major said in London that he hoped negotiations could resolve the situation.

The latest violence has left talks on the future of Northern Ireland in tatters. Northern Ireland's Protestant political parties announced they would boycott the talks so long as police blocked the Orange Order march near Portadown.

Mandela dances in London's morning sun

LONDON (Reuters) - Nelson Mandela danced in the early morning sun in a central London park yesterday, celebrating an enthusiastic reception from star-struck Britons that he said was "beyond words."

The South African president began the second full day of his first state visit to Britain by planting a tree in St James' Park, a short drive from Buckingham Palace where he spent the night under Queen Elizabeth's roof.

A crowd of several hundred, including civil servants in pin-stripe suits on their way to work, turned up for the ceremony in aid of an appeal by heir to the throne Prince Charles to replant the royal parks following a hurricane in 1987.

African singers and dancers in traditional costume welcomed Mandela, dressed in an open-necked shirt rather than the suit he

wore for the royal pomp and ceremony.

The plane tree planted in his honor was "strong, dependable and it lives a long time. It is a Mandela tree," the master of ceremonies told the president.

Asked to sprinkle a spadeful of earth on the tree's roots, Mandela shovelled and shovelled until it was politely suggested he stop. In a short speech he thanked Britain for the welcome and support he had received over the past 30 years.

"The hospitality from the royal family, the government and the people, is beyond words. I did expect a warm welcome but what actually happened exceeded my wildest expectations," he said.

"Not just yesterday and today, the support has been there for a long time. During the anti-apartheid struggle we received enormous support from the people

of Britain."

"I wish I could come here every week and see all these people and water the tree," he concluded.

He then walked over and joined in the dancing as the 55-strong troupe from all parts of South Africa chanted his name, to the delight of spectators some of whom had risen at dawn to see him.

On returning to the palace he met Labor opposition leader Tony Blair and the secretary-general of the Commonwealth, Emeke Anyaoku, before addressing a conference on investment in South Africa.

British Prime Minister John Major told 500 potential investors at the conference that Britain would champion better access for South African goods to the European Union.

"South Africa can look to Britain as a friend in the European Union who will help South Africa achieve access for a wider range of products," Major said.

Since his visit to South Africa two years ago, the first by a British prime minister for 34 years, the two countries had built "a fellowship for the future" with cooperation in business, training, technology and promoting investment.

Bosnia contact group meets in London

THE five-nation "Contact Group" on Bosnia convened in London yesterday to discuss international strategy in a rapidly changing Bosnian political landscape.

Representatives from the governments of Britain, Germany, France, the United States and Russia were expected to examine progress in implementing the Dayton peace accord, British foreign office officials said.

The Contact Group's priority has been to maintain pressure on Bosnian Serb president Radovan Karadzic to quit power and face the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague - a goal it has signally failed to achieve, as Karadzic continues to outmanoeuvre world pressure and cling to his position.

The international community is also trying to support the deeply fractured Muslim-Croat Federation. The Federation is struggling to overcome lingering animosity and mistrust between the two ethnic communities, who were at war until the US pushed them into the alliance in March 1994.

The world community is also keen to see justice done in bringing alleged war criminals to trial in The Hague.

The military goals of the Dayton accord have long been achieved, but in almost every civilian objec-

ive, the international brokers trying to reunify Bosnia appear to be floundering.

The Bosnian Serb parliament amended its constitution, to establish a "Senate" consisting of 55 members appointed by the president who would also chair the authority.

Under the amendment, the Senate would act as an advisory body to "constitutional institutions", and its members would enjoy the same immunity from prosecution as parliamentary deputies.

Although it was not immediately clear how wide the Senate's powers would be, it is almost certain to be seen as yet another tool for Karadzic to entrench his power and protect his hard-line separatist supporters and their policies.

It is also likely to be regarded as yet another challenge to the international demands for Karadzic's complete departure from Bosnian politics, and another headache for international mediators trying to sideline him.

On the other side of the ethnic gulf, the Muslim-Croat Federation succeeded in overcoming some of

their differences to pass a key defense law after weeks of wrangling.

The law is aimed at formally merging the Muslim and Croat armies into a unified force capable of matching the Serbs' military muscle.

The decision to approve the merger also clears the way for some \$240 million worth of military training and hardware from the United States and five Islamic countries - Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey.

Together they will supply arms, communications and transport equipment, while a US State Department spokesman said a contract to coordinate the training programme is likely to be signed this week with a private American firm.

The international community also saw some progress towards bringing war criminals to justice.

War crimes investigators uncovered at least ten corpses that they believe are Muslim victims of Serb massacres outside the town of Srebrenica.

At least 6,000 Moslems are listed as missing from Srebrenica in what some observers have described as the worst atrocity in Europe since the World War II.

Opposition denounces Niger election

NIAMEY (Reuters) - Opponents of Niger's military leader General Ibrahim Bare Maïnassara yesterday denounced his poll victory as an electoral coup d'etat and said they were determined that he should not stay in power.

Provisional results released by the election commission appointed by Maïnassara showed him winning outright with 52.22 percent of votes, while ousted civilian president Mahamane Ousmane polled 19.75 percent.

After two days of confusion at polling stations around the West African country, Maïnassara replaced the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) with his own appointees and placed his opponents under house arrest.

"It's not even electoral fraud, it's pure force," said party official Mamane Sani of the National Movement for a Development Society (MNSD), the biggest party in parliament.

Niger's USTN trade union organization called a nationwide general strike from today.

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Israel's own agony aunt has the answers

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Discounts are what count

FLAIR
GREER FAY CASHMAN

In vintage Hollywood movies, a woman would lift her spirits by purchasing a new hat. After this week's bout of new economic decrees, it's doubtful that a new hat would do the trick. With salary erosion destined for terrifying depths, even a whole new outfit, let alone a hat, will not detract from the bleak picture ahead.

Was it coincidental that the Treasury announced its plans during the three-week mourning period between the 17th of Tamuz and Tisha Be'av?

For those of us already making self-denial lists in the face of impending austerity, clothing will probably rank high. Suddenly those of us who are constantly complaining that we have nothing to wear will discover that our closets are literally bulging with wearables.

Even so, there's always that yen to buy something extra - not necessarily anything extravagant, but something that still conveys a sense of newness. For anyone who wants to give in to that temptation, this is probably the best time, before the budget cuts go into effect and prices start to soar.

End-of-season sales are well and truly underway, with discounts of 20-50 percent. Tel Aviv-based designer Bracha Bar-On has a good selection of timeless mix-and-match separates, mostly in black or white or a combination of the two. Jeel, which caters mainly for the 16-25 age group, is also offering separates, many of them in plastic, wet-look creations which, according to previews, will be the dominant trend next year. Only women with the trimmest figures should bother looking at the racks in Castro and Honigman stores, where the clothes on display are strictly for clients of skeletal proportions.

Women who are a little more well-rounded will do better for themselves with the looser fitting styles of Dorin Frankfurt, Dorit Sadeh and Stefanel; while those who tend to be more buxom will find exactly what they're looking for at Matin Li or Four Seasons.

Anyone who gets a special kick out of wearing international designer labels should take themselves off to the Wear House in the Herzliya Pituah industrial zone, where a DKNY crepe pants suit originally marked at NIS 1,800 is now available for NIS 1,400; and an Escada skirt and matching jacket has been reduced from NIS 3,400 to NIS 1,295.

If these prices are daunting, take heart. Body skimmer dresses are going for as little as NIS 300 and linen suits for NIS 800.



Mermaids will no doubt find this man's Jeel outfit appealing.



This Stefanel outfit offers looser-fitting comfort and style. (Faris)

If anything in excess of NIS 300 is too steep, try the second-hand stores. Not everything on display has been worn before. There are also attractive items salvaged from close-outs or sent from abroad to individuals who



Commercialism: The big Olympic winner

A new statue of Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympics, offers a revealing glimpse of how far the games have come since the old baron's days.

From one angle, de Coubertin appears to be stepping from his stately Greek-columned base right into "Bud World," a high-energy entertainment pavilion/marketing tool and one of many corporate productions that have sprung up in Atlanta for the Summer Olympics.

What de Coubertin, who saw the Olympics as a means to uplift humanity, would think about Bud World is anyone's guess. One thing is sure: He couldn't walk across the street in Atlanta this summer without being bombarded by Olympic banners, billboards, tents, stages and props festooned with corporate logos. If he broke the law, he'd be arrested by police officers wearing Powerade drink "holsters" emblazoned with the company's logo.

The Atlanta Games, to a much greater extent than any previous Olympics, are being brought to you by Coca-Cola, Budweiser, AT&T, McDonald's, Swatch, etc. Thus, downtown Atlanta is now the home of Coca-Cola Olympic City, Bud World and its accompanying Clydesdale Park, AT&T's Global Olympic Village and a bright blue behemoth called "The Century of Motion," courtesy of

General Motors Corporation. Other companies not represented by such attractions have their logos prominently displayed on hundreds of Olympic banners hanging from street lamps.

"For people who go to the Olympics, it may be like the people who go to certain kinds of professional conventions, where 50 years ago people went to hear the lectures and now they go to the exhibits and trade show," said Michael Jacobson, author of *Marketing Madness* and former head of the Center for the Study of Commercialism.

"A lot of people will go to the Olympics and only go to the trade show. The athletes are becoming the sideshow," he said. Commercialism at the Olympics didn't begin in Atlanta. But there's a reason this summer's games, which begin July 19, will take the concept to new heights.

Some of the world's biggest companies paid record amounts, in many cases \$40 million apiece, for the right to exploit the venerable rings and torch symbols of the games. And they aim to get a return on their huge investment. Some are spending hundreds of millions more for the actual promotions.

"You have to justify the bottom-line investment," said Jeff Bliss, who heads the Olympic sponsor program for Chicago-based Sara Lee Corporation, which launched

the sponsorship of its packaged-meats division by laying a 599-meter-long hot dog around a sports field.

The corporate presence at the Olympics has been rapidly growing since 1984, when the Summer Games in Los Angeles showed off the vast moneymaking power of the event. Major sponsors such as Coca-Cola, IBM and McDonald's already have spent a lot of money to sponsor the Olympics into the next century.

Bliss and other marketing executives deny the games have become overly commercialized. The point is to generate goodwill with consumers, they say, adding that it would be self-defeating to go overboard.

"We care about what our consumers think and know how they feel. We know that, because we listen to their opinions," said Mark Preisinger, a spokesman for Atlanta-based Coca-Cola's Olympic program. "What we hear from them is it's not an issue," Preisinger said. "Believe me, if we heard from consumers that we were not doing this the right way or were overdoing it, we'd change."

Some critics say the heavy commercial presence at the 1996 Games is a natural outgrowth of Atlanta's business-is-everything psyche. There's a grain of truth there, but there is much more to it.

Atlanta's games are especially ripe for a marketing onslaught because of organizers' substantial reliance on corporate funding. Although taxpayers are contributing many millions of dollars for such things as security and road improvements, the core funding of the Atlanta Games comes from the private sector.

About one-third of the \$1.7 billion tab for the games is being paid by sponsorship rights fees. "The games people will see in Atlanta could not have taken place on that grand a scale without corporate assistance. The trade-off is the right to use the Olympic symbols," said Scott Mall, a spokesman at the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games.

Each sponsor project has had to pass muster with Olympic organizers, and some proposals have been rejected, Mall said. He would not say what has been turned down. People are accustomed to a lot of marketing big events, and will hardly be shocked by the commercial presence at the Olympics, said Bob Lachky, vice president for Budweiser brands at Anheuser-Busch Co.

"It's part of the landscape, part of American culture, too. It's a capitalistic society," he said. "You've got to have a little whimsy and fun." (AP)

Making sure the gas bills are correct

CAVEAT EMPTOR!
RUTHIE BLUM

CONSUMERS who have been getting gas pains from their gas bills may be disappointed to discover that there is little to be done about this particular form of colic - other than becoming fanatical zealots where comparative shopping is concerned. Or ceasing to consume the product altogether.

M.F., a customer of Supergas, noted a steady increase in his gas bills between December 1994 and March 1996, as well as the addition of a monthly cover charge (*biyuv kavua*).

He wants to know if there are any bodies regulating these "whimsical" hikes, and whether he is allowed to change his supplier - though he doubts whether "other suppliers would be any better, once they have you in their clutches."

Energy Ministry legal advisor Zvi Afik sadly admits that there is very little price discrepancy among the major companies. Regarding the smaller, less well-known ones, who may charge

less, says Oded Menkes, ministry gas department chief engineer. "Consumers should be wary of unknowns, who may sacrifice safety in order to lower prices."

Tell-tale signs of reckless professionalism are telephone diagnoses about possible gas leaks, and slow arrival to investigate customer complaints. According to Afik, the law governing the supply and sale of gas was amended in 1989, opening the market to a little "healthy competition."

Whereas previously consumers had to select a gas company and stay "married" to it, subsequently they were allowed to switch over to a competitor. (Many of you may remember that period, as new-comer gas companies began to "woo" our business through attractive offers of lower prices.)

Nevertheless, this was not a total move towards privatization, as the Ministry of Energy still kept its hawk eye on the gas companies, by regulating and supervising both safety and pricing.

Then, a year ago, the government released its control overpricing. This, too, according to Afik, was done theoretically to "stimulate competition for the benefit of the consumer." In practice, however, "the prices have continued to rise."

Supergas general manager Zvi Tager denies that gas prices have risen. "In fact," he says "gas is between 22 and 33% cheaper in real terms than it was five years ago."

"Before the law was changed in 1989, the government put a freeze on gas prices which lasted nearly five years, in spite of inflation."

"The demand on us to provide expensive services - such as regular inspections, door-to-door delivery and installation even of small balloons, [and] insurance to cover gas-related accidents -

remained, however." Subsequently, he says, Paggas collapsed, and then merged with Petrogas. This collapse, according to Tager, is what finally caused the government to pay attention to what the gas companies had been claiming all along: that they cannot survive with their hands tied.

Paggas general manager in Jerusalem Yitzhak Kialy sent me a copy of the "Charter for the Quality of Service and Rights of the Customer in the Gas Market," drafted jointly in January 1995 by gas company and Energy Ministry representatives.

In it, the gas companies commit to providing all services demanded by the government, without raising the price of gas more than 10% above the cost-of-living index. They are also permitted to charge NIS 5 per month to cover these services. And customers are allowed to change suppliers. So, M.F., take heed. "So far," says Kialy, "not only have we abided

by the charter, but we are still charging less than we are allowed to."

And this, he stresses, is no easy feat, since "an Israeli family's consumption of gas is in direct proportion to its standard of living; as the latter increases, the former decreases, making our toughest competitor the electric company."

One more point for M.F. and other dissatisfied customers. According to the above charter, every gas company must have an ombudsman's office to deal with complaints, the address and phone number of which must appear on the gas bills.

Complaints must be dealt with in under 30 days. In the event that these are not dealt with swiftly enough or to the satisfaction of the customer, they should be passed on to the Gas Department of the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure.

You are invited to offer personal stories about goods and services in this country. Write to: Ruthie Blum, POB 81, 91000 Jerusalem.

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In praise of honesty

THOUGH it is too early to gauge the success of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's first visit to the US as prime minister, it appears he has made prudent diplomatic use of a famous capitalistic tenet called transparency.

Of course, this is not the case with Israel's neighbors, particularly Syria. Even before studying Netanyahu's charges that Damascus was at least passively involved in recent terrorist attacks, such as in Dhahran late last month, the State Department cannot ignore Syria's human rights record within its own borders.

For Netanyahu it would have been much easier, in his meeting with President Bill Clinton and in his speech to the joint session of Congress, to hide behind smoke screens and create the impression that he would turn his back on his voters now that he is in office.

A country which closes its borders - with all its neighbors - to free movement of goods, and which systematically obstructs the activity of foreign investors - whether by allowing bureaucrats to charge bribes anywhere along the licensing and shipment process, or by tapping every fax and modern line in the country - not only violates human rights, but also chokes its own economy.

But the prime minister chose to be transparent and clearly and plainly presented his views on Israel's relations with the Palestinian Authority, negotiations with Syria, regional autocracy and economic freedom.

With its fixation on military grandeur and political belligerency, Syria has shaped an economy addicted to the extraction of its very limited mineral deposits, maintains a labor force shackled to pre-industrialized farming, has a population-explosion problem which is among the world's worst, and an unemployment crisis which, paradoxically, has already led more than half a million Syrians to work for their captive Lebanese.

Given this - not to mention Clinton's misguided backing of Shimon Peres during the election campaign - it is no surprise that the two men seemed somewhat distant despite their generational, cultural, and personal similarities.

Other Middle Eastern regimes, while still lagging behind the democratic Zeitgeist, are making genuine and often successful efforts to catch up economically. Not Syria.

Netanyahu's insistence on not promising to halt further settlement construction may have made his host feel uncomfortable. But it may also have made the US administration respect Netanyahu as a man committed to his cause, no less than his two predecessors to theirs.

In the past, the State Department would treat Syria delicately because of its Soviet patronage. But the Cold War ended years ago, and Syria's clout has diminished considerably.

Moreover, since premier did not hesitate to enunciate those policies they apparently dislike, Clinton and his aides had equally good reason to take at face value the other things Netanyahu said - like his promises to unshackle Israel's centralized economy in the spirit of the American ethos of laissez-faire, and to uphold American values of personal freedom and public security in a region infamous for its disparagement of these.

For a while, immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Damascus seemed to be aware of this shift in the balance of power. But it has now backtracked, either because it was under the impression that its Russian backbone can be restored to its pre-Gorbachev might, or because the changes it was required to undergo were simply too difficult for Syrian President Hafez Assad to stomach.

Indeed, when put in this broader context, the gulf between Netanyahu and his hosts narrows considerably, and the disagreements assume the proportions of tactical rather than strategic differences.

Either way, Syria's recalcitrant leadership threatens not only Israel, but the West as a whole. Had Netanyahu not conveyed this message to Washington, he would have failed in his duty as a friend and admirer of America and its people.

Both Israel and the US agree on the need to pacify the Middle East, and base their own societies on freedoms of speech, association, movement and ownership.

The strains in the Washington-Riyadh relationship go back to well before Dhahran.

Following Desert Storm in 1991, Washington decided to set up an emergency base in Saudi Arabia where vast quantities of warplanes, tanks, artillery and other heavy weapons would be permanently stationed. If a new threat arose US manpower could be flown fast to protect American oil interests in the Middle East.

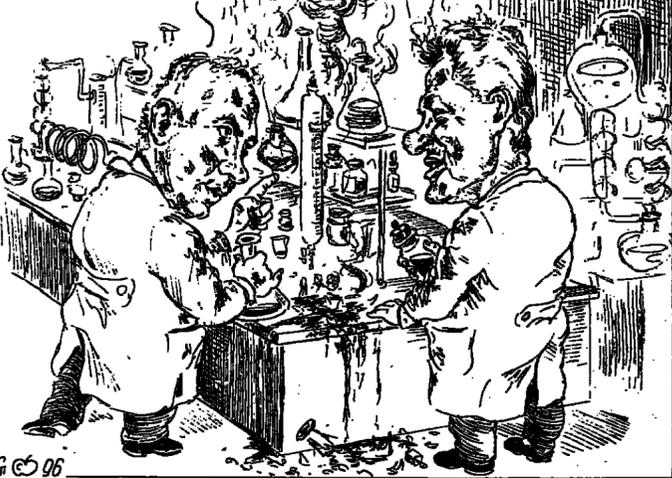
This move came in response to intelligence reports of both Iran and Iraq openly nurturing ambitions to seize control of the vast oil reserves in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, including Kuwait, despite the defeat of Saddam Hussein five years ago. Their reason is simple: He who controls the vast oil reserves of the Middle East controls the world.

To Washington's consternation, the normally cooperative, pro-Western King Fahd rejected the American plan. His intelligence service warned that such a step would further fuel Saudi's growing resentment over the way their country is being turned into a "vast Yankee aircraft carrier."

To compound the situation impoverished middle-class Saudis are increasingly outraged by their

OPINION

LET'S GET THE CHEMISTRY RIGHT



ILEG 96

Terrorists' haven

THE aftermath of the bomb blast in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, a fortnight ago in which 17 Americans died and 250 others were injured is intensifying. A 70-strong CIA-backed specialist team is trying to trace the instigators.

URI DAN DENNIS EISENBERG

But of greater significance is the major crisis developing between the US and Saudi Arabia.

profligate princes' squandering of billions of dollars in the "cesspools" of the West, especially when services and subsidies to ordinary citizens are being cut because of falling oil revenues.

A damage control operation is under way in a desperate attempt to paper over the widening cracks between Riyadh and Washington.

US intelligence believes the deadly truck that exploded in Saudi Arabia was loaded up in Yemen

A worried President Clinton sent FBI chief Louis J. Freeh off to Saudi Arabia, and Defense Secretary William J. Perry said all was well with King Fahd.

Fahd's fears were soon realized. There were bomb attacks in Riyadh, the most recent last November, killing five Americans in a massive blast. Four Saudis were caught and promptly beheaded.

But Saudi sources report that the desperately sick king can no longer control his troublesome family of brothers, half-brothers and other relatives jostling to seize the throne. The family is split between those who want to retain their alliance with the US and those who want their country to remain strictly Moslem, with growing ties to the fundamentalism that is sweeping the Arab world.

The FBI was deeply angered by the Saudis' refusal to allow them to interrogate the men before their execution. It bluntly accused the Saudis of deliberately preventing them from obtaining key information.

But Saudi sources report that the desperately sick king can no longer control his troublesome family of brothers, half-brothers and other relatives jostling to seize the throne. The family is split between those who want to retain their alliance with the US and those who want their country to remain strictly Moslem, with growing ties to the fundamentalism that is sweeping the Arab world.

In the wake of the latest atrocity, the FBI is certain that had it had access to the beheaded terrorists' confession prior to their execution, it would almost certainly have been in a position to prevent the latest attack at Dhahran. The FBI claims it would have discovered whom the terrorists were working for. Worse, it believes that the Saudis know, but aren't telling.

To Washington's consternation, the normally cooperative, pro-Western King Fahd rejected the American plan. His intelligence service warned that such a step would further fuel Saudi's growing resentment over the way their country is being turned into a "vast Yankee aircraft carrier."

The writers of this column have learned something even more damaging: US intelligence's conviction that the two-and-a-half tons of explosives that blew up the Khobar Towers building were loaded onto the deadly truck in Yemen.

To compound the situation impoverished middle-class Saudis are increasingly outraged by their

As one senior US intelligence

official put it to us: "The connection between Baghdad and Yemen is so strong that the finger of suspicion points straight at Saddam - at least in this instance."

This information has caused consternation among the largest and most skilled team of FBI experts ever assembled outside the US as they strive to solve the mystery of who drove the bomb-laden truck up to the US complex in Dhahran, and who sent it.

There are several loose ends, like the mystery of another red Chevrolet truck, also loaded with high explosives, that wound its way around the Middle East, including countries like Jordan and maybe Saudi Arabia.

Saudi intelligence reports regarding this truck and its crew are so contradictory that the FBI regards the Saudis' handling of the issue as nothing short of a scandal.

To the question of who sent both trucks - the Iranians, the Syrians or the Iraqis - the Saudis have no answer. Their coyness stems from fear that the gathering tide of Saudi anti-Western sentiment could grow into a full-scale revolt if the authorities are seen as being too helpful to the US.

The one sure item of information in FBI hands is that two Saudis hostile to the royal family came to an agreement in Beirut nine months ago concerning Saudi volunteers who would be trained by Iranian Iron Guards working hand-in-hand with Hizbullah terrorists to carry out mass terror attacks in their homeland. One of the dissidents is Abdul Wahab Khairi, who hails from a town close to Dhahran.

News of this cooperation for terror has caused no small embarrassment in the State Department, which has been engaged in a massive effort over the past two years to wipe Damascus clean of any taint of terrorism. The aim has been to persuade Israelis to negotiate with Assad, a "worthy peace partner."

Now here is very clear proof of Saudi citizens being trained, under a Syrian umbrella, to topple the royal house of Saud.

The writers are authors of The Mossad: Secrets of the Israeli Secret Service and other books on the Middle East.

Left, right

JAY BUSHINSKY

THE terms left and right get bandied about all the time. The mere mention of one or the other can, in our political atmosphere, arouse animosity or worse. But all one need do is glance at a dictionary to see that in the Israeli political context left and right are total misnomers.

Genuine leftists believe in narrowing the economic gap between rich and poor or eliminating it altogether, assuring viable wages to all employees and guaranteeing them decent working conditions on the job.

Genuine rightists believe in minimal if any governmental interference in the conduct of private enterprise while predicating the national welfare and well-being of society as a whole on the monetary success of the business community.

Leftists advocate racial, ethnic, sexual and religious equality, generous allocations of public funds for the furtherance of the arts and sciences and protection of the natural environment from excessive exploitation by profit-motivated interests.

Rightists stress the importance of preserving national traditions, encouraging religiosity and strengthening religious institutions while emphasizing patriotism and military service.

To affix these terms to Israel's national debate over the future status of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights is absurd, just as it is ridiculous to describe the political "doves" of the Labor and Meretz parties as leftists or the Likud, Tsomet and Moleket "hawks" as rightists.

WHEN DID the luminaries of the former Labor-Meretz government ever show concern for the fact that the thousands of Palestinian workers who commuted daily to Israel were underpaid, denied the social benefits of Israelis and underwent severe personal hardship (stringent security checks) just to get to their jobs?

And wasn't it the same government that allowed a quarter of a million foreign workers to replace the Palestinians barred entry as a result of the closure to be hired at average monthly salaries of \$315; placed in sub-standard housing (15 to a room) and rendered totally dependent on the contractors who employed them or the manpower agencies that imported them for medical services?

Does it make political sense to brand Prime Minister Netanyahu as a rightist despite the fact that he opposes the arbitrary and artificial separation of Israelis and Palestinians advocated by such "leftists" as former foreign minister Ehud Barak and former deputy defense minister Ori Orr on the grounds that it is the only way to preserve an overwhelming Jewish majority in Israel?

Consider this definition of "left" from the New Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus: "The supporters or advocates of varying degrees of social, political or economic change, reform or revolution."

Can the privatization of industrial assets financed by taxpayers that Shimon Peres and his people favor be attributed to a leftist economic approach? Is hobnobbing with millionaires and supplementing private investments from public funds consonant with the Thesaurus's definition of "left"?

And consider its definition of "right": "The supporters or advocates of social, political and economic conservatism or reaction."

Do those words apply to Netanyahu and his Likud colleagues? Even those who object to the right-wing coalition's economic policy and its impact on the financially-constrained elements of the population surely cannot ascribe them to the political philosophy of the right.

Where do the terms "left" and "right" originate, anyway? In the French National Assembly immediately after the Revolution, the radical Jacobins sat to the left of the aisle, while the more moderate Girondins were on the right. The terms were subsequently adopted by all democratic legislatures whose parties also differed on political or economic issues.

But Israel's territorial debate? That has nothing to do with the "left" and "right" of common political parlance, and its opposing sides should not be categorized as such.

The writer is with the Chicago-Sun Times.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ARAFAT'S LIES

Sir, - The obsessive efforts of Misha Lovish to clear the tsaddik Yasser Arafat of any suspicion of wrongdoing leads him to ignore not only that gentleman's repeated prognostications of Israel's elimination as a state and the dispersal (or whatever) of its Jews, but also Arafat's own attestation that the Palestinian National Covenant is alive. It would save Mr. Lovish a lot of time and energy if he would learn, once and for all, that Arafat was lying eight years ago and then again later, if he said the covenant had been revoked. The covenant could in fact be revoked or amended only by the "Palestinian National Council," and then only by a two-thirds majority.

Ararat himself used this fact time after time for over two years as an explanation for the covenant's not being revoked. He claimed he was unable to muster the necessary two-thirds majority. Maybe Mr. Lovish will try to understand then why the covenant has still not been revoked, or amended, and how it is that when the council finally did meet it decided - now, in 1996 - only that a committee, to be appointed, would determine which clauses should be amended in that still live and barbaric document.

One statement in Mr. Lovish's letter was correct. He described a sentence in my published article as a falsehood. It was; only it was not what I had written - there had been an editing error.

Referring to the PNC's decision I wrote: "in effect, it repeated, after nearly three years, no more than the original 1993 undertaking made by Arafat - and the covenant remains in force until a 'committee' decides which clauses are to be amended."

SHMUEL KATZ Tel Aviv Ed.J.P. We regret the editing error in Mr. Katz's original piece.

A NEW IDEA

Sir, - Despite the investment of huge sums of money no solution has yet been found to prevent the carnage on the roads. Here is a new approach that may succeed where other efforts have failed.

Let the country be divided into small sectors. A kibbutz would be a single sector as would a moshav or neighborhood would be a sector. Each sector would be allocated a number of points according to the number of registered drivers and types of vehicles concerned (more points would be allotted for semi-trailers than for private cars). Each driving infringement would lose the sector points. At the end of an agreed period the sectors with most points in their accounts would have money invested in their social infrastructure in the same way as Mifal HaPais builds clubs and sports facilities.

Newspapers would be asked to print league tables similar to those showing the league positions of sports club. The large amount of sectors would not allow for the appearance in the tables of every sector; but the top thirty sectors would appear once a week. The positions would change as teams lost or consolidated points.

A stigma would be attached to drivers who caused their communities to lose points. It is perhaps this point that would prove most effective in lessening the number of road accidents.

MICHAEL ALGE Kiryat Tivon.

IS PRINT PASSE

Sir, - After reading Mr. Charles Krauthammer's article, "The great screen scam" (J.P., June 26), I had to quickly put my thoughts on paper. There is still that relief of venting one's emotional turmoil in writing, and, dare I say it, it is not the same as putting it on the computer screen.

You see, though I love Mr. Krauthammer's articles and usually agree with him, this time I beg to differ. No computer screen, no matter how advanced and easy to read, can substitute for curling up and reading good book or eating breakfast with that paper in hand.

JUDY ABIR Jerusalem.

UGLY SYNAGOGUE

Sir, - On page 3 of June 19th's Jerusalem Post, I noticed a photograph which seemed to represent an artistic rearrangement of the ugly Haifa refineries.

Alas, the caption says that this is a model for a synagogue to be constructed at Tel Aviv University.

I checked the date to make sure this wasn't an April 1 joke, but no, we were in June. Please allow me to express my dismay.

EVA TOREN Tel Aviv.

CHILDREN IN POLITICS

Sir, - The appearance of politicians together with children in the television spots of the political parties has been classified as "political pedophilia" by Yitzhak Kadman, the Director of the National Council for the Child ("Children have no place in campaigns," The Jerusalem Post, May 10).

ping school for it, nor dodging care at dangerous intersections, I don't consider it a serious phenomenon. I also don't think that children appearing with politicians on TV spots was such a terrible thing. It only shows how hypocritical our politicians are: children were fooled to believe that they were suddenly involved in politics. They were fooled, because immediately after the elections, no politician is seen anymore with youngsters.

DR. PHILIP VEERMAN, Defence for Children International, Israel Section Jerusalem.

David Newman of the Humphrey Institute of Social Research of Ben-Gurion University also wrote that "the use of children, by all political parties from Meretz to Moleket, to distribute material... is a disturbing phenomenon - a kind of political pedophilia" ("Manipulation of minds," The Jerusalem Post, June 7).

As in the area of personality disorder (which includes sexual deviation as pedophilia), it is important that such a diagnosis be applied with care. Mental health professionals will only use such a classification "when the definition is regarded as a major personality disturbance with such a degree of chronicity and pervasiveness in personality function as to dominate the individual's orientation to a social life" (Basic Handbook of Child Psychiatry, Joseph Noshpitz, page 35). In other words: we should save the serious words for the serious phenomena. As long as children were not skip-

PICTURE POSTSCRIPT



It's not easy finding a nice, quiet spot in New York where you can read your newspaper undisturbed. Marvin Schwartz (pictured), who now lives in Netanya, admits this isn't the middle of Manhattan but at the Shawangunk cliffs in New Paltz, New York; but the photo was taken in the mid-'70s, so by now maybe this place looks like Manhattan. (Bob Barber)

POSTSCRIPTS

- MORE FROM "Bizarre Book Titles":
Japanese Chins (1994)
Androgynous Objects: String Bags in Central New Guinea (1995)
The Dynamic of Dental Pulp (1994)
Gymnastics for Horses (1994)
Plastic Drinking Glasses and Church Fathers (1995)
Illustrated Encyclopedia of Metal Lunch Boxes (1994)
Imaging the Scrotum (1995)
Social Odors in Mammals (1982)
Psychiatric Disorders in Dental Practice (1994)
The History of the Concrete Roofing Tile (1995)
Sex, Death and Fly Fishing (1995)
Potato Ecology and Modeling Under Conditions Limiting Growth: Proceedings of the Second International Potato Modeling Conference (1995)
Better Babies and the Modern Farm Woman (1995)
The Sun

NOTICE IN a camping equipment store in the UK (you may have to read it a couple of times to catch its genius): "This is the discount of our winter tent."

Norman Cohen

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom right of the page.

July 11, 1996



Calcutta's Chowringhee St., once the center of Jewish life in the city, now takes on a completely different character.

(Richard Lobell)

India: Israel's Far Eastern brother

Israeli popularity in the subcontinent is helping to increase bilateral trade, Hillel Kuttler reports

THREE visitors recently asked Nehru University professor Manohar Lal Sondhi to help reconfirm their flights to Hong Kong. Sondhi's attempts to navigate airline bureaucracy proved fruitless until he informed the Air India clerk that the three were Israelis. "And it was done!" Sondhi exclaimed. "This is one country where Israelis are considered favorite citizens."

Indeed, as a delegation of American Jewish journalists proceeded on a 10-day visit in February to the world's second most populous country, it was easy to see India as the capital of the Israel Friendship Society. From government officials to academicians to celebrants at a Sikh wedding, praise flowed freely for Israel and the perceived good it can bring to the Indian people. With the advent of the Middle East peace process, India was freed in January 1992 to forge diplomatic ties with Israel, and now both sides bemoan the previous 40-plus years' wasted time and opportunities.

Indian government officials freely concede that the public long held Israel in high esteem and the political leadership only recently caught up.

"There never really was a psychological barrier," said then-commerce minister Palaniappan Chidambaram, who now heads India's Finance Ministry under the newly formed United Front party following the recent elections. "It was a political decision at the time that India and Israel wouldn't have diplomatic relations. Once that decision changed, there were no barriers to economic relations."

Diplomatic and business exchanges are now the norm. Israel values India as a market of almost a billion people. Israel in turn is viewed as an emerging economic power and as a source of agricultural and technological expertise.

As Jerusalem's ambassador to New Delhi, Yehoyada Haim, said, "There is an incredible admiration



In Old Delhi, past British influence is reflected in the uniforms worn by schoolchildren. (Richard Lobell)

for Israel ... and I am still wondering what is the reason for this."

One explanation is the two countries' common background as British colonies that attained independence a year apart. Another is the pride each takes in the flourishing of democracy under difficult conditions. To say nothing of the role of religious rivalry - in India's case between Hindus and Moslems. Rightly or not, Jewish Israel is seen as having triumphed over Moslem enemies.

Many Hindus sympathize with Israel's facing down a Moslem land grab. Just as official visitors to Israel are hit with an us-versus-them spiel, so those coming to India get an earful on the Kashmir conflict. Even in Washington the Indian Embassy proffers books and videotapes supporting New Delhi's positions.

FOR INDIA, Pakistan is the demon, in its support for terrorism, its efforts on behalf of Kashmiri separatism, and its purported nuclear capability (though India undoubtedly has the bomb too).

New Delhi sees US policy as tilted toward Islamabad - thanks to what it sees as a Pakistani lobby - although Washington would contest that claim.

Israel, said Haim, takes no position on the Kashmir dispute but concurs with India's position that, according to the Shimla Agreement of 1972, New Delhi and Islamabad must negotiate a settlement.

Pakistan wants an international conference on the matter.

On the issue of Iran, Israel and India are a gulf apart. Whereas

Jerusalem and Washington are in sync on isolating and boycotting the mullahs, Indian officials say that, although they oppose Iran's sponsorship of international terrorism, business and pragmatism dictate maintaining working relations with Teheran. External Affairs Ministry officials estimate that India imports 10 percent of its oil - 60,000 barrels a day - from Iran. Iran also offers India a land route to central Asian markets, something "it would be imprudent" to ignore, according to the ministry's Dilip Lahiri.

India and Iran have been discussing a gas pipeline connecting the countries. While feasibility studies are being conducted, Indian officials doubt the concept will materialize anytime soon because the pipeline would have to pass through Pakistan, which could cut off supplies at will.

Some officials believe Teheran is actively assisting Kashmiri rebels in their battle against the New Delhi government, while others say the aid is just moral.

What deeply worries India is that Moslems from near and far - the 100 million Moslems in India are no small consideration - will jump on Pakistan's Kashmir bandwagon. Rammohan Rao, New Delhi's spokesman on Kashmir matters, said India believes that Saudi Arabia helps fund the Kashmiri guerrillas, while Pakistan "is trying to get Moslem countries aboard by saying Kashmir represents a jihad."

"We would like the countries of the Moslem world to realize that what they are supporting is not a just cause. As far as India is concerned, Kashmir is a part of India and will remain a part of India. The reason there is a conflict is because of the proxy war caused by Pakistan," he said.

ISRAELI YOUTHS made headlines back home last winter by participating in wild drug parties at the resort city of Goa. Haim says a great deal of his time is dedicated to ferrying in doctors and worried parents from back home.

Less conspicuous, but more emblematic of the warming ties between Israel and India, are the now-regular, exploring-our-roots trips by Indian-born Israelis. This group, visiting their hometowns for the first time since they left in the 1950s and '60s, made up about half of the passengers on a New Delhi-to-Agra flight in January.

Also on the plane was a delegation of Israeli businessmen accompanying then-finance minister Avraham Shohat on a two-week visit to South Asia and the Far East. Most saw in India a ripe fruit full of juicy opportunities.

According to Sam Cohen, senior marketing manager for ECI Telecom (which routes signals from the subscriber to the telephone exchange), "India has one of the lowest percentages of telephones per capita in the world, in the vicinity of four per thousand. We foresee a tremendous increase."

With the Indian government liberalizing its telecommunications industry, ECI is "very well positioned" to land contracts, Cohen said. Israeli-Indian trade totals \$500 million annually and Alex Mogie,

head of the finance ministry's Asia desk, said the goal is to reach \$1 billion. According to India's former finance minister Manmohan Singh, "the sky is the limit," and the three memorandums of understanding he signed in New Delhi with Shohat create "a more congenial atmosphere for more investment, increased joint ventures, transfer of technologies and increased flow of trade between the countries."

"We have great admiration for the scientific and technological advances of Israel," said Singh, who headed India's delegation to Yitzhak Rabin's funeral last year. Shohat said Israel supports a free-trade agreement with India, a matter that was raised during his four-day visit.

ISRAEL'S BIGGEST export to India is small precious stones and its biggest import is ... precious stones once they have more patience than we do," said a chuckling Haim.

India also exports processed foods - an Indian company signed a major deal with Osem during Shohat's visit - along with textiles and chemicals.

The Indian Finance Ministry's Chidambaram, who in February led the inaugural Indian business delegation on a four-day visit to Israel, said that the countries' newly formed economic commission will help jump-start further dealings. Thirty-six joint ventures have been approved, and 110 memorandums of understanding signed, he said, in engineering, shipping, textiles, automobiles, multimedia, robotics, security systems, humidity-control systems and diamonds.

He also saw software, agriculture, horticulture and housing as areas of increased bilateral trade.

"We are in a sense competing with each other, but that's good," he said. India could certainly benefit from Israel's agricultural expertise. Haim said that Israel produces a whopping 17 times more per acre than India does. Israel is now helping establish a modern, kibbutz-style farm near New Delhi where it will instruct farmers in irrigation, fertilization and growing in an arid region.

To, that cooperation is evidence not only of Israel's "great emphasis on quality," but its "very strong ethical attitude."

Gandhi's grandson speaks out

THE puzzled look on Rajmohan Gandhi's face breaks into a slight smile when he's asked about his grandfather, Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi. "Gandhi has inspired me, challenged me, without being a burden - unless you regard a challenge as a burden. My brother says, 'If I do anything good, so what? If I do anything bad, you're Gandhi's grandson.'"

Rajmohan Gandhi is sitting in the lobby of a New Delhi hotel, chatting with a group of American journalists. He is an amiable, elegant man, tall and lean, with large, rounded glasses. Even though his brown hair is graying, he cannot possibly be the 60-year-old he claims to be. Rajmohan's career continues in his famed grandfather's path. An economist, he specializes in conflict resolution and bridge-building with an interest in improving both Hindu-Moslem relations in India and Indian-Pakistani relations.

He finds his own knowledge of Judaism and Jewish history lacking but is comfortable discussing his grandfather's connections to Jews.

During Gandhi's stay in South Africa from 1893 to 1915, he developed close friendships with two Jews, Henry Polak and Hermann Kallenbach. The latter owned land outside Johannesburg near where Gandhi established an ashram. Polak lived with Gandhi at the ashram and later became coeditor at a newspaper Gandhi founded there.

"The Gandhi-Kallenbach correspondence was fantastic," Rajmohan says. "They became very close friends. Kallenbach thought his friendship with Gandhi changed his life because of [the] living in simplicity."

Polak and Kallenbach later took issue with Gandhi's leadership of India's freedom movement at the expense of speaking more forcefully for oppressed European Jewry.

"Gandhi's sympathies were with the Jews and the enemies of the Nazis, of course. But Gandhi did not think the freedom movement could wait."

Rajmohan raises the controversy over Gandhi's line that Jews should resist the Nazis passively: "When he



Rajmohan Gandhi: Mahatma's sympathies were with the Jews and the enemies of Nazis. (Lobell)

advised the Jews, it was the academic guy rather than the practical guy. It is my belief that if he had been a Jew in Europe, he would have said we should fight them any way we can - nonviolently if possible but any way if not."

Rajmohan Gandhi is pessimistic about the state of Hindu-Moslem relations in India now. The Moslems "are a very attractive scapegoat" for the poor social conditions in the country, he says, are under-represented in electoral office and the perception among Hindus "is that Moslems are pampered."

Rajmohan had once contemplated living a celibate life as his grandfather had preached. He eventually married his wife Usha, 47, but only after seven years, as his parents had also waited when they courted. They have a daughter, 18, and a 15-year-old son.

When not writing - his book, *The Good Boatman: A Portrait of Gandhi* was published this year - the Gandhis enjoy their city. "The cultural scene in New Delhi is very rich. There's dancing, music, plays - in English."

"Every place in India is overcrowded. The idea of strolling" - he pauses as if contemplating a far-off joy - "you can't imagine what the people of India feel in such places as in the U.S. Heaven must be like this." H.K.

Taming mother-in-law is risky

DEAR RUTHIE
RUTHIE BLUM

DEAR Ruthie. My mother-in-law is too dominant a figure in our lives. She calls at least five times a day, visits unannounced, and my wife won't make a move - including buying a new outfit - without consulting her first.

I think it is unhealthy that my wife is so dependent on her mother. For my part, I find it a nuisance to have a mother-in-law continuously "snooping" around.

Son-in-Law in a Slump
Haifa

DEAR Slump-in-Law. The interesting question to ponder here is why a woman so dependent on her mother attracted you in the first place. After all, it's highly doubtful your mother-in-law's apron suddenly sprouted strings subsequent to her daughter's wedding.

The next point to consider is how you may be contributing to this "unhealthy" threesome. For example, perhaps it has been convenient for you to be absent from your wife in some profound way, and her mother all-too-happily fills the void.

Or maybe you have a need to be "dependent upon"; and you found a woman whom your gut felt would fulfill this need, but forgot to take her mother's role into account.

Still, if unannounced visits are unacceptable to you, you will have to be the one to put a stop to them - even at the risk of being considered the "bad guy."

Being firm might lead to fewer phone calls during the times you are at home. Just keep in mind you may end up inspiring mother-in-lawly wrath - of the kind most underling-in-laws tend to shy away from.

Dear Ruthie. My husband told me he has been having "casual" affairs for the past few years, which, according to him, "don't mean anything."

I am shocked and hurt, but want to believe him. How should I handle this?

Affair Aghast
Somewhere in Israel

DEAR AA. Whether the affairs are casual, to say they "mean nothing" is as ridiculous as it's evasive. No human behavior - particularly that which forms a pattern - is meaningless.

Before being able to contemplate how to "handle this," you must first address the meaning of these affairs.

Perhaps your husband harbors deep insecurity where his manhood is concerned - and needs "casual" confirmation of his sexuality. If so, this pattern is likely to repeat itself if he doesn't deal with it.

Or maybe your marriage needs work. If so, you have been an inadequate participant in his infidelity all along, and should examine how you can alter your own behavior.

Another possibility is your husband wants to have his cake and eat it. If so, you must decide whether you're willing to put up with his occasional poking of the puff pastry.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Thursday, July 11, 1996

Trade deficit reaches \$5.6b. in first half of '96

DAVID HARRIS

THE trade deficit reached \$5.6 billion in the first half of the year, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported yesterday.

Based on current projections, the annual trade deficit is to reach \$11.2b. by the end of the year, \$100 million more than last year's record-setting gap between goods exported and imported.

Imported goods during the first six months of the year totaled \$14.9b., while exports only reached \$9.3b. The level of imports has been steady since March, after monthly increases of 1 percent to 2% since January 1994.

Imports in June reached \$2.48b., which included 44% raw materials, 17% investment assets, and 13% consumer goods.

The level of investment asset imports continued to grow, but at a slower rate - 0.8% a month since February compared with 1.5% from July 1995 to January 1996.

So far this year, exports have also held steady after average monthly increases of 0.5% in the second half of last year. June exports totaled \$1.55b., including 76% industrial products (mainly software), 20% diamonds, and 4% agricultural goods. Agricultural exports in the 1995-1996 season brought in \$720 million, 15% more than the previous season.

Nasser petition vs. Safra brothers rejected

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE High Court of Justice this week turned down an appeal by businessman Jacques Nasser to sue the Safra brothers shortly after Tel Aviv District Court Judge Gabriel Kling rejected a similar petition filed by Nasser.

Nasser filed a lawsuit against the Safras at the end of 1995 for failing to compensate him according to an agreement between the two sides when the Safra acquired control of First International Bank (FIBI).

Kling accepted the Safra's claim that the disagreement should be handled through arbitration in Geneva, Switzerland.

According to the claim, Nasser served as a straw man for Edmond Safra in the 1989 purchase of FIBI, the bank's parent company, and was promised a cash payment following the transfer of shares to the Safra family. Nasser is demanding either the amount in cash or bank shares.

After Kling's decision, Nasser's attorneys, Yosef Segev and Avi Serf, asked the High Court on Sunday to halt temporarily the proceedings and reverse the district court ruling. On Tuesday, the High Court rejected the appeal.

The district court's decision came after four court hearings where it heard evidence from international expert witnesses and reviewed various documents. Kling ordered Nasser to pay the Safras NIS 40,000 in legal costs.

The Safra brothers' attorney, Arnon Goldenberg, petitioned for the halt of proceedings against them here due to an agreement with Nasser stipulating that all disputes regarding the bank are to be settled by an agreed-upon arbitrator in Switzerland.

The High Court also rejected Nasser's request to hear his testimony as soon as possible here due to his poor health. The court said Nasser's medical report, prepared by Hadassah-University Hospital hematologist Prof. Eliezer Rachmilevich, was short and inadequate, and since the matter is under the jurisdiction of the district court, it would have to rule on the issue.

Motorola: Gov't cuts won't stop investment

EVELYN GORDON and JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

MOTOROLA (US) officials denied reports in the local media yesterday suggesting the company had aborted large-scale investment plans here due to the government's decision to cut drastically capital-investment aid programs.

Speaking on behalf of the parent company, Hanan Ahsaf, president of Motorola (Israel), told the Knesset Economics Committee yesterday that Motorola had canceled a \$1.2 billion investment plan to build a semiconductor plant here if the government goes ahead with plans to shrink its capital-investment aid programs from 34 percent to 20%.

However, the parent company denied that it had ever committed itself to making such an investment here, and would not say it would definitively rule out Israel as the site for a new semiconductor plant despite the cut.

"Motorola never announced a plan to build a plant in Israel, and an announcement for such a significant plant would be made from local headquarters here, in Arizona, as well as in the local country where the plant would be located," said Jeff Gorin, manager

of media relations for Motorola's Semiconductor Products Sector division headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona. "I can't really comment on plans for future plants," he added.

During his speech to the Knesset Economics Committee, Ahsaf said the cut would cause many companies, such as Motorola and Intel, to stop investing here.

Yehoshua Abramovich, director of the Manufacturers Association's economics division, told the committee that three other firms which had been considering local investments have called this week to say they would take Israel off their list of options if the grants were reduced. One of these, he said, was Tower Semiconductor, which was considering a \$250 million investment to expand its computer chip plant in Migdal Ha'emek.

Tower could not be reached for comment.

Abramovich also referred to an unnamed chemical company considering a \$70m. investment and

an unnamed electronics firm backed by Korean investors considering an investment in the North.

State budget director Ron Kroll, representing the Treasury, responded that by cutting the grant sizes, money would be freed up to invest in physical infrastructure and industrial research and development in the periphery. This, he said, would ultimately make outlying regions much more attractive to investors than the grants.

Finance Minister Dan Meridor had raised a similar argument in the Knesset Finance Committee on Tuesday. Meridor noted that 90% of all investments in Israel do not make use of the grants at all.

"Each factory that does [use the grants] costs the economy more than what the economy gains from it," he said.

Economics Committee chairman Elie Goldschmidt (Labor), however, supported the Manufacturers Association's position that the move would be "catastrophic" for the economy, and promised that the committee would fight it.



Japan's Ambassador to Lebanon Yasuji Ishigaki (l) shakes hands with Lebanon's acting finance minister Fouad Siniora in Beirut yesterday after signing an agreement under which Japan extended Lebanon a development loan for 3b. yen.

Cabinet to consider privatization program this month

DAVID HARRIS

THE cabinet will discuss the privatization plans of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Finance Minister Dan Meridor before the end of the month, Treasury Director-General David Brodet said this week.

However, Brodet did not hint which companies are likely to be sold off. Selling state-owned assets

is a "very important factor" in the government's plans for economic reform, he said.

Since his election, Netanyahu has stated his determination to reform the economy. "It's not a simple, or one-shot move. It requires a strategy - deregulation, privatization, the break up of cartels, and so on. I'm committed to doing it," the prime minister said in Washington on Tuesday night. Netanyahu also mentioned a ten-year program that would make the country economically self-sufficient.

In a pre-election interview in May, Netanyahu said that within his first 100 days in office, he would lay the legal groundwork for privatizing 50 of the some 160 state-owned companies, a scheme called "unrealistic" by former finance minister Avraham Shohat at the time.

There is already talk in Treasury corridors of an imminent announcement of the sale, in full or in part, of the state's "jewels in the crown," including El Al, Egged, and Bezeq. Cable and Wireless already owns 10 percent of Bezeq, and there have been reports that the UK firm wants to purchase an even larger stake.

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למטרות תמונה

Meridor recently took over responsibility for shortlisting the firms to be privatized. Upon Netanyahu's return from Washington, he, together with Meridor, Justice Minister Ya'acov Ne'eman, and his economics adviser Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel, will meet to formulate a privatization plan to be presented to cabinet.

Shohat was to launch an options program earlier this year, but delayed it until after the vote so as not to be seen as offering bribes to the electorate. Economists believe that the Netanyahu administration may also run such a scheme.

Final audited results are expected to be released tomorrow following the company's annual general meeting.

The statement said that the firm's 1995 total sales grew by about 56 percent to 27 billion crowns, and should grow to 33b. crowns in 1996.

It added that Skoda invested some 1.6b. crowns into its operations in 1995.

Czech Skoda expects '95 loss

PRAGUE (Reuters) - Czech engineering concern Skoda said yesterday it expects to post a gross loss of 166 million crowns (\$6.1m.) in 1995, after posting a gross profit of 453m. crowns the previous year.

The firm said in a statement that the loss is due to a recommendation by its auditor, Ernst & Young, to create some 550m. crowns in reserves for doubtful receivables.

"According to our auditor's recommendation, 442m. crowns will be set aside for receivables, finan-

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Shipyards director asked to resign: The sailors' union and two of its officers asked the High Court of Justice yesterday to force Arye Ronen, director of the Shipyards and Ports Administration, either to resign this post or to resign from Zim's board of directors. The petition argued that for Ronen to occupy both posts was a clear conflict of interest. Evelyn Gordon

EC proposes 'environmental' road taxing system: The European Commission proposed yesterday to change the current EU system of taxing road users to reflect more accurately the damage and pollution individual trucks do to the roads and the environment.

The changes to the "Eurovignette" system currently used by Germany, Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands are intended to encourage trucking firms to use less polluting trucks and vehicles. The commission estimates the proposal will not only cut pollution and traffic jams but also save between 1.6 billion to 4b. European currency units (\$1.98b. to \$4.96b.) on road maintenance costs. Reuter

German cabinet okays tough '97 budget: The German cabinet yesterday approved Finance Minister Theo Waigel's tough 1997 budget, but coalition politicians and economists warned it may not be tough enough to hit the target for the single European currency.

Waigel said his ultra-stringent budget would get Germany's deficit down to 2.5 percent in 1997 from 3.5%.

The Maastricht Treaty on economic and monetary union (EMU) requires countries wishing to go ahead with the single currency to have a public deficit in 1997 no greater than 3% percent of GDP. Reuter

Abu Dhabi free-trade zone to target int'l markets: Abu Dhabi emirate's planned \$3b. free-trade zone will be open to foreign investors and will target international markets, officials said yesterday.

"It is the intention to allow investment by foreigners, that's Gulf and non-Gulf investors in the free zone," said Amin Badr el-Din, one of the zone's five board members. Reuter

Sales of large UK retail firms down: First-quarter sales and profits of large UK retail companies weakened compared with the last quarter in 1995, the Commerce Department said yesterday.

A survey of 554 corporations showed profits after taxes declined in the first quarter to \$2.80b., from \$4.57b. in the previous quarter. Total profits also fell from a year earlier - 1995's first quarter - when they were \$3.20b. Reuter

Major pledges \$60m. aid to S. Africa: British Prime Minister John Major said yesterday that Britain would give South Africa \$60 million (\$93m.) of aid.

Major, who said the aid was targeted particularly at improving standards of education, announced the donation during a visit by South African President Nelson Mandela. Reuter

Fund redemptions in '96 reach NIS 4.2b.

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

NET redemptions from provident and training funds reached NIS 1.12 billion in June, increasing total withdrawals since January to NIS 4.22b., the Treasury reported yesterday.

The amount is based on figures taken from the country's five largest banks.

The large amount of withdrawals reflects the public's continued preference to avoid investing in the capital market due to fears of poor yields as well as investors' transferring capital to saving plans.

The Treasury said fund redemptions were NIS 784m. in May and NIS 1.09b. in April.

In June, provident fund redemptions increased to NIS 1.08b. compared with withdrawals of NIS 787m. in May and NIS 877m. in April. Training fund redemptions

also increased in June to NIS 41m. compared NIS 3m. in May and NIS 203m. in April.

The Treasury said that April redemptions primarily stemmed from one-time withdrawals by policemen and prison guards.

Withdrawals from bank savings plans reached about NIS 105m. in June compared with NIS 88m. in May and NIS 257m. in April. Since January, total redemptions from these plans have reached over NIS 900m.

Most of the money withdrawn from savings plans was deposited into index-linked plans which totaled NIS 265m. in June compared with NIS 192m. in May and NIS 438m. in April.

Foreign-currency linked plans registered withdrawals of NIS 160m. compared with NIS 280m. in May and NIS 181m. in April.

Russia's Yakovlev plans to buy Fokker

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian aircraft builder Aviatsonnaya Korporatsiya Yakovlev plans to buy bankrupt Dutch aircraft maker NV Koninklijke Nederlandse Vliegtuigenfabriek Fokker this year for 370 million guilders (\$216.2m.), a senior Yakovlev official said yesterday.

"We seriously intend to buy Fokker before the end of this year," Yakovlev Vice-President Arkady Gurtovoi told Reuters.

Fokker, however, said yesterday it was not yet close to a deal with Yakovlev.

"There is no question yet of us and Yakovlev having reached agreement," a spokesman for the court-appointed receivers said.

Gurtovoi said Yakovlev would fund the purchase by borrowing from Western banks, and these credits would be backed by Russian government guarantees.

A commission of Russian and Dutch ministries will examine the proposal starting in the next few days, and if it approves, the matter will then go to the Russian cabinet, he said.

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS				
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (20.6.96)				
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.825	4.875	5.575	
Pound sterling (£100,000)	4.000	4.000	4.250	
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.875	1.875	2.375	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	1.000	1.000	1.500	
Yen (10 million yen)				

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (10.7.96)					
Currency basket	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep. Rate**
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.4158	3.4724	3.09	3.25	3.5441
German mark	3.1478	3.1954	2.89	3.05	3.1730
French franc	2.0638	2.0971	2.02	2.18	2.0807
Japanese yen (100)	4.8754	4.8371	4.79	5.03	4.8181
Dutch florin	0.8306	0.8194	0.89	0.95	0.8146
Swiss franc	2.8809	2.9071	2.81	2.95	2.8819
Australian dollar	1.8389	1.8886	1.80	1.90	1.8640
Canadian dollar	2.4912	2.5814	2.44	2.57	2.5117
Italian lire (1000)	0.4710	0.4786	0.48	0.49	0.4782
Norwegian krona	0.4822	0.4904	0.47	0.50	0.4888
Danish krone	0.5357	0.5444	0.52	0.56	0.5399
Finland mark	0.6746	0.6855	0.66	0.70	0.6896
Canadian dollar	2.2936	2.3368	2.26	2.37	2.3187
Australian dollar	2.2176	2.2581	2.17	2.29	2.2387
S. African rand	0.7289	0.7387	0.67	0.74	0.7324
Belgian franc (10)	1.0016	1.0178	0.98	1.04	1.0097
Austrian schilling (10)	2.8324	2.8797	2.88	3.03	2.8857
Italian lire (1000)	2.0558	2.0638	2.01	2.12	2.0689
Jordanian dinar	4.5800	4.6800	4.58	4.88	4.4738
Egyptian pound	0.8900	0.9700	0.80	0.87	0.9995
EUU	3.9100	3.9731	—	—	3.9407
Irish punt	5.0039	5.0861	4.91	5.16	5.0459
Spanish peseta (100)	2.4527	2.4923	2.41	2.53	2.4725

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel. SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

Handwritten signature or stamp in the bottom right corner.

Rehov Bar-Ilan to be partially closed on Shabbat

TRANSPORT Minister Yitzhak Levy told the Knesset plenum yesterday that Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan will be closed on Shabbat and holidays during prayer times beginning this Friday night.

The partial closure will remain in effect for four months, and then be reevaluated. This was the compromise advised by President Ezer Weizman, who had tried to mediate between the haredi residents of the street, who want the road closed, and secular representatives, who insist it remain open. It was also the solution put forward by the Sturm Committee, which was appointed nearly two years ago by Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert.

Levy's announcement came in response to several motions to the agenda. Levy said the problem is that although many synagogues and yeshivot are found along Bar-Ilan Street, it is also a major thoroughfare.

"We have to find a way to meet the needs of both [sides]," he said. He said the closure was a way of preventing accidents, not a submission to religious pressure.

He said he had not found local secular residents in the area who demanded the closure, only activists from other parts of the city.

He cited precedents for Saturday road closures of main thoroughfares, including the closure of part of Tel Aviv's Rehov Dizengoff, to

LIAT COLLINS

turn it into a pedestrian mall for entertainment purposes, and the closure of part of Netanya's Rehov Herzl.

Levy said these roads are closed so the secular public can go to coffee houses and are closed throughout the day, whereas Bar-Ilan would be closed only during prayer times: Fridays between 6:30 pm and 9 pm; Saturdays, 7:30 am to 11:30 am and 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Ophir Pines (Labor) warned against turning Jerusalem into Bnei Brak and said the city's youth are leaving because of religious coercion. He said the decision to close the road "is like throwing a burning match into a barrel of explosives."

Silvan Shalom (Likud) called "for peaceful co-existence first of all at home." He supported the president's suggestion.

Meretz faction leader Ran Cohen said the argument is not over the facts but whether society wants true equality and mutual respect, adding the haredim are not prepared to accept the needs of the secular public. He said closing Rehov Bar-Ilan constituted giving into pressure and start a spate of road closures in Jerusalem.

Shlomo Benizri (Shas) complained that Meretz MKs and activists were trying to create

the impression that the religious are conducting a mini-intifada over the road. He said the previous government had been prepared to build bypass roads out of security considerations in the name of the peace, and there are several ways for drivers to bypass Bar-Ilan.

He said only 700 vehicles use the road during prayer times. "They can use a different road. Also in the name of peace."

Hanan Porat (National Religious Party) condemned "the baseless hatred" that the issue had generated. Shmuel Halpert (UTJ) said Meretz activists were carrying out provocations at the road which is inhabited almost entirely by religious people.

Hemdat, the Council for Freedom of Science, Religion and Culture in Israel, issued a statement saying Levy's decision to close the road during prayer times was an attempt "to throw sand in our eyes. The haredim, through their violence, have achieved their aim - to get the road totally closed on Shabbat."

"This step will harm the basic rights of secular residents and will create a precedent for closing essential main roads in the future," the statement continued. "It will have national ramifications, perhaps leading to similar demands in other mixed cities, which would be a declaration of war between the haredim and secular residents, a war that nobody wants."

Mordechai pleads on behalf of defense

STEVE RODAN

DEFENSE Minister Yitzhak Mordechai last night appealed to the government to guarantee the health of the financially ailing defense establishment, after the cabinet decision to cut NIS 825 million from the defense budget.

Speaking at the awarding of the Israel Defense Prize at the President's Residence in Jerusalem, Mordechai referred to the budget battle being waged between the government and the military, as well as the crisis within the defense industries.

"The defense establishment is undergoing difficult days and is being pressed to cope with an increasingly harsh budget reality," Mordechai said.

He said the government and the military establishment must rehabilitate the troubled state-owned defense industries and ensure that research and development projects continue.

"Along with marketing efforts, the defense industries must also implement new technologies that are developed for defense needs and divert them for civilian

needs," Mordechai said.

He urged the country to maintain its qualitative military edge, even as it cuts the defense budget. He cited several projects, such as the Ofek and Amos satellites and the Arrow anti-missile project as contributing to deterrence.

The defense prize was awarded to two projects out of 12 candidates. One award went to a team composed of representatives of TAAS-Israel Industries, Rafael, Elop, and the Defense Ministry for a project that was not detailed.

Another went to a team from the Intelligence Corps for another classified project that, in the words of the awards committee, stressed "original thinking, creative imagination, and initiative."

In his address, President Ezer Weizman called for the establishment of two other state prizes - one for excellence in developing human skills in the defense establishment and the other to honor the Israeli who did the most to promote peace with the Arab states. He said the latter award should be named after Yitzhak Rabin.

WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy to clear. Slight drop in temperatures.

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Conditions
Amsterdam	10	18	cloudy
Berlin	10	18	partly
Bombay	26	32	clear
Buenos Aires	10	18	partly
Chicago	10	18	clear
Dallas	10	18	clear
Frankfurt	10	18	clear
Hong Kong	27	32	clear
London	10	18	clear
Los Angeles	10	18	clear
Madrid	10	18	clear
Moscow	10	18	clear
New York	10	18	clear
Paris	10	18	clear
Shanghai	27	32	clear
Sydney	10	18	clear
Tokyo	10	18	clear

Meretz to Jerusalemites: Fight street shutdown

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

MERETZ leader Yossi Sarid yesterday called on all Jerusalem residents to take to the streets and join the battle against the decision to close Rehov Bar-Ilan during prayer time on Shabbat and holidays.

Sarid blasted the government, which he said is a captive in the hands of the haredim, for giving

them a prize for rioting and violence.

He said "the new government promised the secular public it has nothing to fear in the way of religious coercion. This arrangement is not only a surrender to the haredim, but worse, it's a surren-

der to haredi violence. Their appetite will increase now that they have proved that violence works. They will riot, they will curse, they will throw diapers with excrement at policemen, as they did on Saturday. They will throw stones, break window

panes and endanger lives." Sarid said Meretz will fight against the closure of streets in Jerusalem, petition the High Court of Justice, and demonstrate. "But this campaign is not for Meretz, but for the residents of Jerusalem. If they don't mobilize by the thousands to take part in the battle, we cannot promise success," he said.

Ethiopian minister treated here after murder attempt

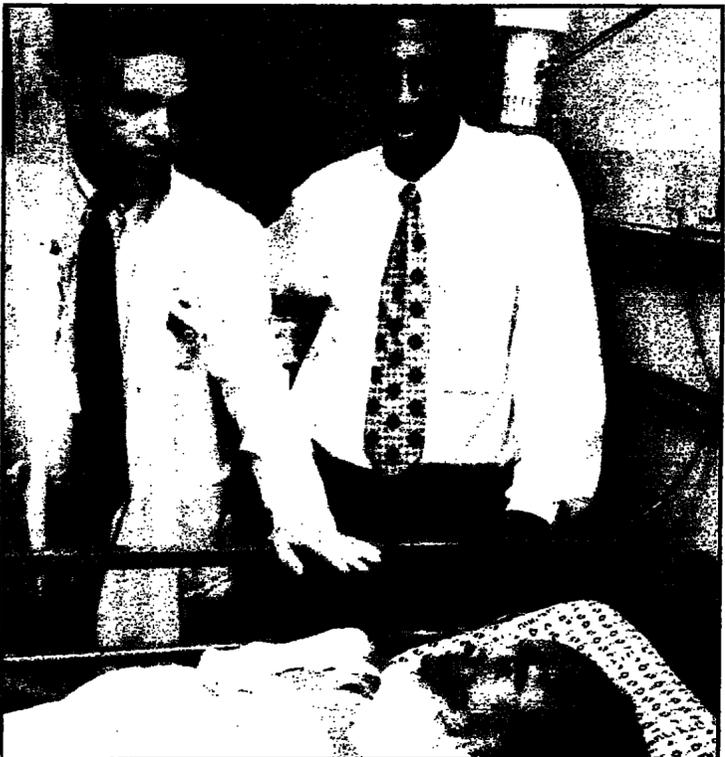
JUDY SIEGEL

ETHIOPIA'S transportation and communications minister, Hussein Abdul-Magid, was recovering yesterday at Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Hospital from surgery, following an assassination attempt in Addis Ababa on Monday.

Abdul-Magid, 52, was hit by six bullets in his face and arms. His bodyguard was killed. He told the head of Shaare Zedek's orthopedic surgery department, Dr. Menachem Izhaki, that the would-be assassins were apparently Somali but were not caught. When local doctors realized they did not have all the necessary equipment to treat the minister properly, they contacted the Israel Embassy in Addis Ababa, where Izhaki's son is the deputy secretary of the embassy. He called his father, who agreed to admit the minister. Abdul-Magid was flown by private plane to Israel, and went into surgery before midnight Tuesday.

Abdul-Magid, an economist, was visited at Shaare Zedek yesterday by Health Minister Tzahi Hanegbi and Transportation Minister Yitzhak Levy.

A surgical team headed by Izhaki and Dr. Ya'acov Golan, head of the plastic surgery department, set his fractures and repaired the wounds. Izhaki said the minister would be able to return home in a few days. Asked whether the surgery could not be performed in Addis Ababa, Izhaki - who has visited the



Dr. Yonatan Halevy and Labor MK Adisu Massala visit Ethiopian Transportation and Communications Minister Hussein Abdul-Magid yesterday at his Shaare Zedek Hospital bedside after surgery. (Brian Hendler)

Ethiopian capital - said there isn't a single computerized tomography (CT) scan in the entire city. "What we saw in the CT could not have

been seen in a simple X-ray. In addition, we used an image intensifier in the operating room, but such is not available in Ethiopian hospi-

tal surgical theaters." The minister, said Izhaki, "is a very pleasant man, and very aware of his condition, which is stable."

Man gets 10 years for dealing in Ecstasy

A 23-year old man was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by Tel Aviv District Court yesterday for selling Ecstasy pills and attempting to import cocaine.

Judge Saviyona Rotlevy refused to accept a plea bargain whereby Bazov Mashiah would be imprisoned for 4 1/2 years and fined NIS 20,000. "There is a wide gap between the suggested sentence and the one he deserves," said Rotlevy. The proposed sentence is neither a deterrent nor will it protect the public from the drug epidemic, she added.

Mashiah was accused of buying and selling 400 Ecstasy pills from two others who smuggled large amounts from Belgium to Israel. Rotlevy summed up that Mashiah played an active part in an international drug smuggling ring by distributing Ecstasy pills here.

Raine Marcus

Histadrut threatens nationwide strike next week

THE Histadrut and large unions yesterday announced there would be a nationwide one-day strike next Wednesday, unless the government modifies its economic plan and distributes the cuts equally among all sectors of the population.

The strike is to involve all the country's organized workers. Histadrut Chairman MK Amir Peretz said that if the government does not act by Tuesday to spread the economic measures among all the population sectors, the Histadrut will launch a campaign beginning with the strike. Michal Yudelman

IDF officer involved in phone-record scandal accuses others of involvement

EVELYN GORDON

LT-COL. Avner Liron, who is facing disciplinary charges for making improper use of a journalist's phone records, yesterday dropped a petition to the High Court of Justice charging that other senior army officials were participants in the crime, but plans to file a complaint with the police on the matter.

However, the court agreed with Liron's other charges, relating to the way his trial is being handled, and pressured the state into complying with his demands on this front.

The petition stemmed from a scandal which arose after the army got a court order enabling it to wiretap Israel Radio journalist Yoni Ben-Menahem's cellular phone, in an effort to discover which army officers were leaking information to him. The court order covered only calls made to or from army numbers. However, Telephone mistakenly gave Liron, who was in charge of the investigation, records of all calls made to

or from Ben-Menahem's phone during the relevant period.

Liron is facing a disciplinary hearing for making use of these records, which should simply have been destroyed. However, he charged that three other senior officers also made use of the records, and that he was being discriminated against. These officers, he charged, escaped trouble by lying to cover up their involvement.

According to Liron, Military Police chief Niram Goldbrum lied to both the chief of general staff and the prime minister, Yoel Moses, head of Military Police investigations, lied to the chief of general staff, the prime minister, and attorney-general, and deputy chief military prosecutor Avi Levy lied in court about the affair. The army, however, said it has seen no evidence to support these charges. Justices Shlomo Levine, Tova

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the seven of spades, seven of hearts, jack of diamonds, and nine of clubs.

DNA test matches blood to murder victim

RAINE MARCUS

POLICE yesterday received the results of DNA examinations carried out on bloodstains found in the car of Shulamit Bleichman. The stains apparently matched the missing woman's blood, and senior police sources believe there is little hope of finding Bleichman alive.

The tests were carried out by Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital after Bleichman's car, abandoned in Rehovot, was found on May 22, a week after her mother, Ida, was found murdered in her Rehovot apartment. Ida Bleichman had been shot and her body, discovered a few days after the murder, had been rolled up in a carpet.

The findings of the examinations reveal a "very high chance that the blood was that of Bleichman." Tests were also carried out based on bone marrow tests conducted when Shulamit Bleichman's son was born.

Shulamit Bleichman, an employee at Rehovot's Weizmann Institute, her boyfriend Dr. Amiram Hochberg, and the couple's son Itai, 10, disappeared after the murder. A massive search revealed Shulamit Bleichman's car abandoned in Rehovot. Bleichman and Hochberg had been at odds over their son, who

was the subject of numerous law suits.

On June 1, a van hired by Hochberg was discovered in the parking lot of the Taba Hilton Hotel. According to evidence in the hands of police, Hochberg and Itai crossed into Egypt using false passports. Hochberg had emptied his bank accounts before the three's disappearance.

Interpol and foreign police agencies have been informed, but there have been no signs of them since.

Police will send officers abroad to assist in tracing Hochberg and his son, in what has been described as a "very complicated operation."

Court considering furlough for Klingberg

RAINE MARCUS

TEL Aviv District Court Judge Oded Mudrich has asked the opinions of the Prisons Service and security bodies before deciding whether to allow convicted spy Marcus Klingberg out on his first furlough from prison. Mudrich said he will give his decision as soon as he is presented with security reports.

Klingberg's lawyer, Avigdor Feldman, said his client agreed to heavy police security during his furlough, his first since he entered prison 14 years ago, including discontinuing telephones and installing microphones wherever he stays.

Klingberg, 78, was sentenced to 20 years in 1983 for giving the Soviet Union information related to biological warfare while he was the deputy head of the Biological Institute in Ness Ziona.

An appeal to the Supreme Court at the end of last year, asking for his release on grounds of ill health, was turned down. The Parole Board also rejected his request for release after he had served two-thirds of his sentence.

But Klingberg, who suffers from a variety of illnesses, said yesterday he would not reveal any secrets should he be allowed out on furlough.

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